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ABSTRACT

This module is the sixth in an inservice education series for extension professionals that consists of seven independent training modules. It provides inservice education in analyzing public problems, anticipating the consequences of extension's involvement in issues, and working effectively in areas of controversy. The following five units provide 18 hours of learning experience: introduction to public policy education; models of public policymaking; facts, myths, values, ethics, and advocacy; roles for public policy educators; and public policy education methods. The module consists of five major parts. The sourcebook includes a concise, readable synopsis of the content, objectives, a selected annotated bibliography (15 items), and a list of 32 references. The leader's guide provides step-by-step instructions on how to conduct the workshop and suggestions for use of the other parts. Preliminary and follow-up activities are described, as well as those to take place during the workshop. The learner's packet includes materials to be used during the workshop. The section of selected readings provide essential ideas and background. The last section lists instructional aids--a poster and videotapes--and provides masters for producing overhead transparencies and two reports on public policy education. (YLB)

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# Working With Our Publics

*In-Service Education*
*for Cooperative Extension*

## Module 6
Education for Public Decisions

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To order materials or to request information about this module, or the entire series, *Working With Our Publics: In-Service Education for Cooperative Extension*, write to:

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# Foreword

Welcome to *Working With Our Publics: In-Service Education for Cooperative Extension.* Those who have been involved in developing this project look forward to your participation as a way of bringing it full circle—back to the state and county Extension educators whose requests for help in their changing professional roles initiated the materials you are working with today.

This in-service education series has been supported by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, ECOP, the ECOP Subcommittee on Personnel and Program Development, ES-USDA, and all of the state and territorial Extension services and their directors. Each of these groups hopes you find the training a rewarding and enjoyable experience.

*Working With Our Publics* was made possible through its many supporters and participants, a few of whom are mentioned here. Initial support by Mary Nell Greenwood was crucial, as has been the continuing involvement of Administrator Myron Johnsrud. The ECOP Subcommittee on Personnel and Program Development has guided every step of the project. M. Randall Barnett, Terry L. Gibson, W. Robert Lovan, Ronald C. Powers, and Leodrey Williams deserve special mention, as does Connie McKenna, whose untold hours of work and miles of travel made sure it all fell into place.

The expertise, leadership, proficiency, and hours of work devoted to the project by the developers of the seven modules—David R. Sanderson, Richard T. Liles and R. David Mustian, Lee J. Cary and Jack D. Timmons, Laverne B. Forest, Betty L. Wells, Verne W. House and Ardis A. Young, and J. David Deshler, respectively—brought it all together.

It is obvious that *Working With Our Publics* would not have come into being without the financial support of the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. What may not be so immediately obvious is the continuing interest, support, and dialogue provided by the Foundation through its president, Norman A. Brown.

The many state and county Extension professionals who took part in this project as writers, researchers, reviewers, and field test participants in the individual modules are gratefully acknowledged.

As project leader, I would like to acknowledge here the support given to the entire series by North Carolina Agricultural Extension Service Director Chester D. Black. Grateful recognition is given to a long-time colleague and collaborator in many writing projects, Adele P. Covington, who was principal editor for the series. Valuable contributions to the development were made by Joan Wright (California), Lee Hoffman (Washington, D.C.), Brian Findsen (New Zealand), Heriberto Martinez (Puerto Rico), and in the later phases by Janice L. Hastings (New Hampshire), Jo Jones (Ohio), John M. Pettitt, John G. Richardson, and Frank J. Smith (North Carolina). David M. Jenkins, Department Head, and the staff of North Carolina State University's Department of Agricultural Communications deserve special thanks for their outstanding performance in publishing the modules.

*Working With Our Publics* is designed to increase your knowledge and skills for work with your changing clientele in today's social environment. It also will help you, as a member of the Extension team, to work with the imperative issues facing the Cooperative Extension System, as well as to expand those skills as an Extension educator that are a necessary complement to your other technical and administrative roles.

If you are new to the practice of Extension, we hope that you will view these training materials as a greeting and a gesture of support from those who have gone before you. If you are an experienced Extension educator, we hope that you will enjoy this "literary conversation" with your peers. In either case, we are confident that you will find the information and activities presented here to be timely, stimulating, and practical. After all, they were developed by Extension educators!

*Edgar J. Boone, Project Director*

Assistant Director, North Carolina
Agricultural Extension Service, and
Head, Department of Adult and
Community College Education

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Raleigh, North Carolina

## Overview of the Series

This series, *Working With Our Publics: In-Service Education for Cooperative Extension,* consists of seven independent training modules. Based upon needs and objectives identified by Extension professionals, the modules are designed to stand on their own as independent instructional packages, or to be used as a comprehensive series. Very briefly, the modules and their authors are:

**Module 1: Understanding Cooperative Extension.** The history, mission, values, and networks that make the Cooperative Extension System and the land-grant institutions unique. Participants will examine their own expectations, values, and skills, in light of the System's needs, to ensure a good "fit" between the individual and the organization. (Nine contact hours of training developed by David R. Sanderson, University of Maine at Orono.)

**Module 2: The Extension Education Process.** An introduction to, and guided practice in, the premises, concepts, and processes of nonformal Extension education—planning, designing and implementing, and evaluating and accounting for Extension education programs. Both new and experienced staff members who complete this module will understand and be able to apply the programming process as it relates to Extension education. (Twenty-four contact hours of training developed by Richard T. Liles and R. David Mustian, North Carolina State University at Raleigh.)

**Module 3: Developing Leadership.** How to acquire and exercise leadership skills and how to identify, recruit, develop, and work with community leaders. Intended for all Extension professionals, the module is designed to improve participants' abilities to identify and involve lay leaders in Extension programs and, hence, to develop leadership capabilities among Extension's clientele. (Twelve contact hours of training developed by Lee J. Cary and Jack D. Timmons, University of Missouri at Columbia.)

**Module 4: Situational Analysis.** How to determine the need for the Extension educator's involvement in issues and to understand the economic, social, political, and environmental contexts in planning, designing, and implementing programs. This module is designed to provide both new and experienced Extension staff members with an appreciation of the role that analysis plays in programming and decisionmaking, as well as the skills to identify, collect, analyze, and use relevant data in the Extension education effort. (Twelve contact hours of training developed by Laverne B. Forest, University of Wisconsin–Madison.)

**Module 5: Working With Groups and Organizations.** Development of skills in working with and through groups and understanding the behavior of groups, organizations, and agencies. New and experienced staff members who complete their training will be better able to analyze the behavior of individuals, groups, organizations, and governmental agencies. They will gain the skills to build mutually beneficial working relationships, and to deal with networks of influence and key power actors in client communities. (Eighteen contact hours of training developed by Betty L. Wells, Iowa State University.)

**Module 6: Education for Public Decisions.** In-service education in analyzing public problems, anticipating the consequences of Extension's involvement in issues, and working effectively in areas of controversy. Personnel who play a part in deciding Extension's involvement will build the knowledge and skills needed to design, deliver, and evaluate educational programs on public issues. (Eighteen contact hours of training developed by Verne W. House, Montana State University, and Ardis A. Young, Washington State University.)

**Module 7: Techniques for Futures Perspectives.** Information and exercises on working with Extension's publics to achieve a proactive stance toward the future through projecting future conditions, analyzing trends, and inventing futures. All participants, particularly those with a background of field experience, will benefit from enhanced capabilities to develop and provide educational programming that helps clients carry out systematic planning for the future. (Twelve contact hours of training developed by J. David Deshler, Cornell University.)

## How to Use This Module

This module consists of five major parts, separated into sections in this notebook. Workshop leaders are urged to become thoroughly familiar with each of these parts well before they schedule training.

**Sourcebook.** The Sourcebook includes a concise, readable synopsis of the Module's content, the objectives of the Module, and a Selected Annotated Bibliography. Separately bound copies of the Sourcebook are available for workshop learners. They may be used as preliminary readings or as follow-up materials after the learners have completed the workshop.

**Leader's Guide.** The Guide provides step-by-step instructions on how to conduct the workshop. Preliminary and follow-up activities are described, as well as those to take place during the workshop.

**Learners' Packet.** All materials, other than the Sourcebook, that are intended for distribution to the learners are included in the Learners' Packet. Additional copies may be purchased from the publishers or reproduced locally. Suggestions for when these materials should be used are in the Leader's Guide.

**Selected Readings.** The Selected Readings are primarily for enrichment. The information in most of them has been abstracted into Fact Sheets in the Learners' Packet or presented in the videotapes. They are presented in this part of the Module as a convenient reference for leaders and learners.

**Instructional Aids.** The Instructional Aids include a poster, videotapes, and masters for producing overhead transparencies. Suggestions about when to use the various aids are included in the Leader's Guide.

*Edgar J. Boone, Project Director*

## Module Developers

**Verne W. House**, Professor and Extension Economist at Montana State University, Bozeman, has been a national leader in public policy education since acting as Director of the award-winning "Otter Rock" Project in 1976. At that time he was also directing KEEP, Montana's Kellogg leadership project. He has been involved in numerous public policy education and leadership development programs nationwide. In 1981, he published *Shaping Public Policy—The Educator's Role,* which provided the first *easy reader* reference on public policy methods for Extension specialists and agents. House previously served on the faculty of the University of Wyoming, where he earned bachelor's and master's degrees. His Ph.D. degree, from Washington State University, is in agricultural economics. Since 1985, he has taught public policy education at the Western Regional Extension Winter School at the University of Arizona.

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## Other Contributors

In addition to the authors and advisers, many of whom doubled as reviewers and advisers, numerous individuals are recognized for generous contributions to **Education for Public Decisions.** Simple recognition is not enough to thank Mary Byron, Project Administrative Assistant, for sensitive support in all phases of this project, and to Mary Ellen Wolfe, for writing most of the Leader's Guide. The one phrase that best describes their performance is talent and intelligence dedicated to producing quality. They each deserve a bushel of medals.

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## Advisors

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**Working With Our Publics**

Module 6: Education for Public Decisions

# Sourcebook

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## Goals and Objectives

The *instructional goals* of **Education for Public Decisions** are to:

- Teach public policy education philosophy and methods to Extension agents, specialists, and administrators throughout the Cooperative Extension System.
- Improve Extension educators' ability to educate people about public issues.
- Teach Extension educators how public policy education methods can be useful to them in any Extension program subject to controversy.

The *learning objectives* are that, at the conclusion of the Module, participants can:

- Demonstrate an understanding of public policy education and how it relates to Extension education activities.
- Demonstrate familiarity with public policymaking models by using at least one to describe the public policymaking process.
- Develop public policy programs and provide services regarding value-laden issues, without assuming an advocacy role.
- Identify roles appropriate for Extension educators in delivering public policy education programs.
- Use several different strategies or methods that tie together educational theory, public policy education philosophy, and political models.
- Apply what has been learned by developing a plan for an effective public policy education program.

## Unit I: Introduction to Public Policy Education

By **Verne W. House** and **Karen Behm**

This course of study will help you teach about controversial public issues without becoming controversial. The body of thought presented in this Module is known as *public policy education*. What is public policy education? Richard Barrows (n.d., p. 1) defines it as "an Extension program that applies the knowledge of the university to public issues and educates citizens to enable them to make better-informed policy choices." Flinchbaugh (1974) says that the root cause of public policy issues is disagreement about what the role of government should be. While the experts differ on wording and emphasis, most agree that public decisionmaking differs substantially from private decisionmaking and requires different educational methods.

Extension agents and specialists can play a special role in public decisionmaking. Many of us already have been involved in public policy decisionmaking, sometimes as educators and sometimes as advocates. The contents of this Module will help us improve our effectiveness and our viability when we work with people who seek to influence public policy. Recent experience indicates a real need for public policy education. So, increasingly, state Extension services nationwide are responding to this need.

The response will become more apparent as the Cooperative Extension System begins to formalize its work around national initiatives. All of us—Extension agents, specialists, administrators—will be affected by the reorientation of Extension programming, and public policy education is sure to find an enduring place in Extension programs on critical issues. Critical issues are, by their nature, controversial.

Why does public policy education seem essential to future Extension programming? People today have become aware of what is happening outside their local area. The public is more sensitive to the effects of agricultural chemicals on health; more aware of the impacts that international markets have on local commodity prices; more knowledgeable of the link between events in the nation's capital and their local community affairs. In short, public attitudes and relationships are changing, so Extension is changing, too. All of us—Extension agricultural agents, home economists, specialists in crops and livestock—are affected. We do not have to go looking for public problems and issues; they find us.

Obviously, not all problems on the horizon are public ones. Many will not involve public decisionmaking at all because, in our mixed economy, there are private choices as well as public ones. For many individuals, determining the "best" private/public mix is a primary public policy concern. Some people want a larger public role; others do not. This is largely a matter of individual value judgment. The debate about governmental versus private responsibilities is a matter of great importance to many of the people we teach.

How can public policy education be useful? Learning the methods of public policy education can prevent your programs from being blocked by controversy and enable you to carry out programs that you might otherwise have had to avoid. Using the methods of public policy education helps you deal with issues that divide your clients into factions. And, in the process, you can earn the respect of all of them. Public policy education methods will help you understand what is going on in the public arena.

It is important to be aware, from the beginning, that public policy education is a subdiscipline; it is not a program area, but is applicable to all program areas. It can be (but does not have to be) a separate program effort, or line item, or plan of work. If public policy education is not a program area or effort, then what is it?

## Defining Public Policy Education

Public policy education is a methodology—a combination of philosophy and methods. The philosophy is based on the ideals of self-government; the methods are those that educators have found helpful when dealing with controversy. Together, the philosophy and methods provide a repertoire of educational materials that Extension educators can use when dealing with public issues. But before going further, let us clarify some terminology and establish our study of public policy education on a solid footing.

*Policy* is an agreed-upon course of action, guiding principle, or procedure considered to be expedient, prudent, or advantageous. For example, "Payday is the last day of the month." Many Extension public policy educators use this definition of *public policy*: a settled course of action adopted and followed by the public. Political scientists give a more detailed definition. To them (Cochran, 1986, p. 2), public policy is "an intentional course of action followed by a government institution or official for resolving an issue of public concern." According to Cochran's definition, public policy is formally expressed in laws, public statements, official regulations, or widely accepted and publicly visible patterns of behavior. Regardless of which definition is used, public policies are defined by many groups, such as councils, legislatures, and courts, and they take many forms. Laws are initiated by the Legislative branch, promulgated and carried out by the Administrative branch, and interpreted by the Judicial branch. All of these actions create public policy.

*Education* is sometimes defined as information dissemination and technology transfer. But there is more to education than redistributing the store of knowledge and facilitating the adoption of new technology. Education also builds the capacity to solve problems, to reason, and to understand people. Education is commonly aimed at individuals, but it is important to recognize that our intent may just as well be to improve the capacity and understanding of organizations.

In **Module 2, The Extension Education Process**, Liles and Mustian list four distinct components of the Extension education process: (1) the learner, (2) the Extension educator, (3) the context, and (4) the content. The learner is the focus. Extension educators help initiate and facilitate the development, implementation, and evaluation of Extension programs. They link the learner "consumers" to the information source. The context refers to the environment in which Extension operates. And finally, the content of the education process is the stimulus and subject matter that brings desired change in the learner's behavior. Education is the change in the learner that results from the interaction of these components.

The following are the four components of public policy education:

1. Learners are the people potentially affected by a public policy issue.

2. Extension educators are agents and specialists who involve learners in an educational program.

3. The context is public decisionmaking: where, how, and by whom the decisions will be made.

4. The content is specific to the issue: how to increase understanding of the issue, identify alternative solutions, and inform decisionmakers about the consequences of the alternatives.

Public policy education increases learners' understanding of public decisionmaking by enabling them to participate in the process with the best information available. The public policy educator links the components so that their interaction educates the learner.

The rationale for public policy education is philosophical. Being informed about and understanding how public policy is made increases the public's capacity for constructive involvement. Public policy educators believe, as did Thomas Jefferson, that increasing people's understanding about the consequences of alternative solutions to an issue increases the probability of better policy. Jim Hildreth, a leader among public policy educators, asserts that the objective of public policy education is to raise the quality of debate about the issue (House, 1981). A change of policy is not necessarily the goal of public policy education; one of the alternatives always considered is the status quo. Therefore, the concept of Extension educator as change agent applies here only when we focus on the learners. That is, the goal of public policy education is to change learners, not policies.

Are you convinced of the importance of public policy education? You may be asking yourself, "What real opportunities exist for Extension education involving public decisionmaking?" Exploring this topic is a necessary first step to understanding what public policy education is all about.

In your career as an Extension educator, have you ever been involved in public decisions? If so, what happened? Was it an educational success? Or were you serving politics instead of education? Was it a good experience, or did you get "burned"?

Extension education has done a lot to change rural and farm life in America. Extension educators have been called "change agents." In general, we are perceived as trying to do good. But what happens when these attempts generate criticism? We do not expect it. It seems unfair. It upsets our plans. It is a problem. Our credibility may be threatened. Our support may become divided. What can we do about this?

We must recognize that controversy and criticism often go with the job. Sooner or later, we are likely to step into a controversy that we did not even know existed. If we know it is there, perhaps we can avoid it. Sometimes avoidance is the wisest choice. In other cases, we might choose to redesign our education program to deal constructively with the situation.

If you find yourself face to face with a public decision, how can you proceed? How can you find out what is going on? If you decide to educate about the issue, how should you go about it? Extension agents and specialists need answers to these questions. The intent of this Module is to start you on a course of study that will let you come closer to the emotional fires that forge public policy without getting burned.

## Private Decisions Versus Public Decisions

How many decisions did you make today? How many decisions did others make that affected you? Millions, perhaps even billions of decisions are made each day. They range from the minuscule choice between Diet versus Classic Coke to significant decisions—proposing marriage or starting a business. Most decisions are private. They are made by individuals and firms with little thought to how they will affect those not immediately involved. You want to ask someone to marry you? Fine; don't bother us with it. That is your decision. Our economy and indeed our culture assume that individuals and firms are the best judges of what is in their own interest.

Contrast this to what you read in the newspaper. What do you hear and see on the radio and television news? Are newscasters reporting private decisions? Seldom. Private decisions are news only if the decision (1) is peculiar, abnormal, or about some famous person; or (2) runs counter to law or custom; or (3) affects significant numbers of individuals; or (4) has an impact on the "public welfare."

Private decisions are not normally controversial. They are usually treated as "none of the public's business." So one may ask, "Why is it that the 'news' is mostly about controversy?" The obvious answer is that sensation "sells." The less obvious fact is that controversy implies the existence of a problem that cannot be solved privately; it requires public intervention.

There is another big component to the news: the actions of government are followed continuously. What the President of the United States does every day is news; what the president of General Motors does is seldom news—only when it affects the general economy. While most decisions made daily are private, it is public decisions that occupy most of the news and much of our attention.

Some individuals perceive the major difference between private and public decisions to be that, when we make private decisions, we are trying to do something for ourselves. This line of reasoning goes on to argue that we get involved in public decisions only to protect ourselves. This point of view is reflected caustically in one of Murphy's Laws: "No man, woman, or child is safe so long as the Legislature is in session." Some may see these observations about motives for involvement in government as cynical. It is true that there are people who act on noble motivations to see that government is fair, efficient, humane, consistent, and so forth. But involvement is more commonly propelled by some sense of injustice or personal loss.

Motives and behavior aside, public decisions *are* very important to us. They affect the way we make our living and the quality of life itself. And the extent of our use of government is not obvious. For example, from his review of county government in sparsely populated Stillwater County, Montana, Egan (1986) developed a list of no less than 68 functions for which county government is responsible. Public decisions determine the quality of education, control traffic, provide defense, stabilize banking, and supply our judicial and legislative systems. None of these services would be provided without public decisions to determine what the policy should be. It is the decisionmaking process that distinguishes public from private decisions.

There is a need for education for public decisions, even though the educator's role is not readily apparent to many Extension agents and specialists. Thomas Jefferson stated this point eloquently:

> I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves;
>
> and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion,
>
> the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education. —Thomas Jefferson, September, 1820

Jefferson's statement upholds the role of the individual as the best judge of his or her best interests, while recognizing the legitimate role for education to enable the individual to become a better decisionmaker. His reference in the first line to "the ultimate powers of the society" patently includes the making of public decisions as well as private ones.

## What Public Policy Education Does for Extension Agents and Specialists

Public policy educators have a special role in our society: to "inform the peoples' discretion" about alternative solutions to public dilemmas. The emphasis in this Module is on the Extension educator's role in involving people in public policymaking in contrast to the politician's role as an advocate for a single solution.

When should the Extension educator use public policy education methods? When we anticipate that controversy is going to generate proposals for change in public policy, we can begin to involve the people who will be affected. In these cases, we can design educational programs that deal directly with the issue. We can seek out the best information and translate it to our situation. We can be involved without revealing our position.

Some will call this a "cop out" and say that Extension educators are shirking their responsibility as leaders. Such goading ignores the fact that every time a County Extension agent or state specialist takes a position on an issue, he or she builds a following that is more loyal, but smaller. Eventually, the few "friends" remaining will help load the furniture on the truck so the "leader" can move on.

The role of public policy educator is not an easy one. Extension educators cannot always anticipate controversy. And, when it comes, we cannot always stay on the sidelines. Sometimes we get surprised by a thunderstorm because we did not notice the clouds. People often try to "borrow" some of our credibility to aid their own cause. This is becoming more common in Extension as our communities evolve from their agricultural base. Hildreth (House, 1981, p. 116) put it this way:

> All education, in one way or another, involves public policy issues. This statement has become more clear in recent years. Many of the topics which used to be considered objective technical subject matter are now policy issues. Laws are proposed or passed about these issues. Education on topics in food and nutrition, housing, child care, safety of household equipment and fabrics, local government, and land use are but a few examples. Unless carefully planned, the presentation of information about the benefits or lack of benefits of eating meat or land-use planning may be viewed as favoring one public policy over another.
>
> Public policy processes involve more than controversy. Predictions of consequences are very important, and often involve scientific knowledge. But with controversy, formerly objective statements may be perceived as taking sides on a public issue. Thus, whether you want to be in public policy education or not, you are.

So we are already in deep water. Let us be sure that we can swim, or at least float. And let us also see what we, as key members of land-grant institutions, can do to educate for public decisions.

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## Public Policy Education Related to Extension Initiatives and Program Areas

Q: Is public policy education a separate and distinct form of Extension education?

A: No. Effective Extension education methods can be adapted to deal with the controversy that attends public decisions.

Q: If I use public policy education methods, how am I going to get my other work done?

A: Without public policy education methods, you will not be able to get your "other work" done.

Q: Are not community development, leadership development, and public policy education all the same?

A: No, but there are similarities.

Q: Why do you say we should include public policy education in all Extension program areas?

A: There are potential public issues in all Extension program areas.

The foregoing questions are commonly asked. To these we must add two other pressing questions that surfaced since the recent adoption by the national Cooperative Extension System of eight new initiatives. These national initiatives, for the next five years are:

- agricultural competitiveness and profitability;
- alternative agricultural opportunities;
- water quality;
- conservation and management of natural resources;
- revitalization of rural America;
- improving nutrition, diet, and health;
- increasing family economic and emotional stability; and
- building human capital.

The federal Cooperative Extension staff is currently identifying "critical issues" that must be faced if we are to accomplish these initiatives, and state Extension services are beginning to follow suit. Therefore, the additional two questions to be asked are: (1) What are the implications of reorienting Extension programs around initiatives for public policy education? and (2) What effect can public policy education have on the achievement of these initiatives?

Public policy education is an issue-oriented methodology that can help us anticipate and cope with controversy in any Extension program area.

### Issue-Oriented Education

Most Extension education is "client-oriented," although the relationship implied here is more symbiotic than a simple determination of programs based on a needs assessment. This tendency is easy to observe among Extension subject-matter specialists; they typically work "hand in glove" with a community or other interest group in a tightly defined technical area, such as irrigation or soils. These programs have been Extension's "bread and butter," and their effectiveness can be seen in the high rate of adoption of technology and utilization of information. Further, there has been a quid pro quo because these Extension users have been careful to execute the political work essential to the viability of such Extension programs. A similar, if less consistent, arrangement exists between Extension home economists and the users of their educational services.

Let us review briefly a few important elements in the typical Extension client-oriented program arrangement. The essential feature is that the Extension educator designs programs by listening to the clients. Then, ways are found to help those clients solve their perceived problems. Such "teacher-learner" relationships can go for decades, resulting in intense "user loyalty." Consistency and a degree of predictability are ensured, and the Extension educator learns how to teach his or her audience, over time. This is "client-oriented" Extension education. Extension has sometimes been criticized for using it so much, but it has been effective. True, this approach has some weaknesses, such as a propensity for noncritical thinking. But it is a social maxim that to gain strength one has to give strength. Client-oriented programs have given strength to clients, which has resulted in reciprocal support for these Extension programs.

Compare this approach to "issue-oriented" education. Issue-oriented education is designed and conducted differently from client-oriented education. The public policy educator monitors social, political, and economic trends to identify emerging issues, which is a subjective process. The essential element in issue-oriented education is that the educator recognizes an issue and then figures out who needs educating. This is the opposite of the client-oriented approach, which identifies audiences, first, and then works out issues relevant to those audiences.

After an issue is recognized, the public policy educator identifies who is likely to be involved. Methods for doing this, such as political inventorying and brainstorming, among others, are taught in this Module. Then, the public policy educator decides whether to proceed. The next step is to involve affected parties in designing a public policy education program. The strength gained by focusing on the issue is the ability to work with all parties.

An example of an issue-oriented program may clarify how it differs from client-directed programming. Let us take a hypothetical case: groundwater quality. Suppose that you have been hearing and reading reports of groundwater quality problems. Folks pay more attention to toxic wastes than they used to. So when people notice an old, abandoned chemical barrel, they tend to wonder what might be in it, or worse, what might be leaking out of it. Can it get into the drinking water? Suppose water-quality tests occasionally show some traces of contamination? Even if the level of contamination is very low, there may be more myths than facts circulating about the effects of contamination. Just this week, two different Extension Homemakers clubs asked you about starting some educational programs on the quality of water for home use. You have already been working with farmers to arrange for out-of-county disposal of chemical wastes. Is there an issue here? It seems so, but it is not clearly stated, and it is not obvious who might share this concern. Are there others who might be interested? Probably. Can you go to any one of these interested parties for guidance about designing an educational program? Yes, but do not be surprised if their reaction is less than enthusiastic.

So what can you do? One option is to do nothing. Another is to turn to a program-planning process that will allow you to educate the people in how to solve or at least cope with this situation. Facing the issue squarely means involving all affected parties, not just one group that we traditionally consider to be our clients. The methods of public policy education provide processes that help us inventory potential audiences and plan ahead.

Public policy education is not a program area, such as agriculture and natural resources or home economics. This distinction may not be clear, because we do have Extension public policy specialists who conduct programs about issues. Public policy education is a methodology that can be used in *any* Extension program area. It is a way of keeping the doors open to the various interest groups in your county or state. Public policy education also is a way of opening doors to groups that you have not worked with before.

In the next section we will relate public policy education to traditional Extension program areas. We will use the client versus issue orientation distinction to make clear how the approach differs when educating for public rather than private decisions.

Most Extension education is client oriented rather than issue oriented. In the first case, the educational program is determined by the clients. In the second, the clients are determined by the issue.

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## Agriculture and Natural Resources and Home Economics

Extension education's contribution to society is viewed by many as that of providing the public with research-based information about agricultural production, marketing, and home economics. Are public policy specialists suggesting that Extension should stop doing this? Of course not! Extension work with agricultural production and marketing appears to be essential to agriculture's ability to compete successfully in world markets. Public policy education offers ways to continue the job as an Extension educator when there is disagreement. For example, disagreement may erupt among wheat growers concerning mandatory production controls; or among groups concerned about pesticides to control grasshoppers; or among families concerned about nutritional effects of red meat or preservatives.

Extension educators must be able to operate with special-interest groups, but independently from them; as someone whose expertise is accessible to all, but not as a staff person to anyone. How is this accomplished? Effective Extension methods provide most of the answer. But, when there is potential for public involvement, the methods of public policy education are particularly useful.

## Community Development, Leadership Development, and Public Policy Education

The other types of Extension programs—community development and leadership development—deal regularly with public decisions. However, these programs differ in philosophy, approach, and objectives from public policy education. The following descriptions are oversimplified to draw out the distinctions.

*Leadership development* programs are designed to make people more effective at whatever they choose to do. The purposes of these programs are to teach communication skills and how public policy is made; to teach where to get and how to use information; and to encourage application of the learning to public affairs. The leadership development program manager may exert influence, but each learner decides what he or she will actually do. Leadership development might be characterized by the statement, "We can teach them how to drive and give them the keys to the car, but we can't tell them where to go."

*Community development* programs facilitate the direction and application of group energy toward some common goal determined by those involved. The typical methods used in these programs follow the social action process, or some similar model, so the Extension educator is put in the role of facilitating the process or coaching others in how to use the process as they move toward their objective. Thus, community developers have been labeled "process oriented." In community development, the term "change agent" describes one who is teamed up with a group that is seeking change. The change may be to increase business activity, build a swimming pool, or whatever, but the objective is phrased in terms of a project. The program is not focused on developing the people involved; that is a by-product. In community development, "The group decides where it wants to go; we can give them the keys to the car and the map, and sometimes go along for the ride."

*Public policy education* begins with the issue and tries to educate those who will be affected by public policy. The objective is not usually reflective of any one individual or group. If an issue exists or is emerging, controversy over the objectives, alternatives, and interpretation of the consequences is to be expected. So the identification of affected parties and conscious efforts to involve them in the policymaking process are built into the educational program. The public policy educator designs the program and facilitates the educational process. In public policy education, it is not clear where the learners want to go. Some of them would not know how to get there. They may not want to ride together. Some of them know how to drive better than others. We give them maps and driving lessons. Sometimes we help them figure out where they have been. We do not ride along, but they often will call in for consultation. (This makes public policy educators sound like the AAA.)

Extension public policy educators, who typically give more attention to scientifically developed information than do Extension community development educators, have been labeled "issue oriented," yet, in fact, they are "information oriented." This difference may be determined more by one's discipline than by a preferred teaching style. Note this difference in goals: community development programs are designed to help people bring about change, whereas public policy education is designed to help people make informed choices about whether or not they want change.

As usual, labels are like collars. They fit some of us but chafe others. Historically, public policy education has been conducted mainly by agricultural economists because that discipline is good at using logic and data in analyzing alternatives. Community development specialists are more diverse in disciplinary background; some are agricultural economists, but many are trained in rural sociology, planning, education, government, or other disciplines. As a group, they are more skilled at group facilitation processes. Those in leadership development are mainly agricultural economists and rural sociologists who have "people skills." The mix is changing, now that most state Extension services are developing programs in Family Community Leadership; many of the Extension educators in Family Community Leadership are Extension home economists. So, to a degree, our respective activities have fashioned our labels. We are reminded that the famed economic philosopher, Kenneth Boulding, defines economics as "what economists do." Perhaps it is our work more than our disciplinary background that defines us.

Each of these three types of Extension education—community development, leadership development, and public policy education—complements the others. The lessons that people learn in leadership development tend to make them receptive to research-based information and nurture the expectation that one can work with people to effect solutions. The contemporary approaches to social action, taught in this Module, have borrowed a leaf from the public policy educators' book and anticipated opposition or other points of view. People who have participated in leadership development or community development programs appear to be much more receptive to programs on public issues. The presence of such complementarities among these activities suggests that cooperation will make all of us more effective. As well, issues we face today are more complex than in the past, demanding multidisciplinary responses with more interaction among subject-matter specialists.

### Public Policy and Youth Education

It is easy to overlook young people as a potential audience. Indeed, youths do not equal adults in the making of public policy. They are less likely to influence the choices made. However, youths are often affected by public policy. Sometimes they can be involved in programs that deal with issues that interest them. For example, school policy is especially important to most youths, but they rarely express their preferences in any constructive way to school administrators or trustees. Leadership and citizenship education help prepare youths to fulfill their role as policymakers. Again, the degree to which these programs succeed influences future opportunities for public policy education.

## Public Policy Educators: Past and Present

Who are Extension public policy educators? What is the history of this activity? Each state Extension service has one or two subject-matter specialists in public policy education. Their titles vary: public policy specialist, public affairs specialist, agricultural policy specialist, wheat policy specialist, family policy specialist, among others. Most of these specialists are agricultural economists because public policy education began and thrived in that discipline. In recent years a number of Extension home economists have begun to apply public policy education to the numerous

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issues that affect the family, food, housing, employment, and so forth. There is also a sprinkling of other disciplines, such as political science.

About 1 percent of those who are now County Extension agents have been trained in public policy education. Some attended short courses in North Carolina, Colorado, or Arizona. In recent years, a number of Extension home economics agents have attended the Duluth Summer School. Public policy education really began for Extension agents during the mid-1970s, when projects in Michigan and the western states gave intensive in-service education to about 90 Extension agents. At present, several state Extension services offer in-service education that introduces the subject of public policy education. But the only formal courses are at the Western Extension Winter School at the University of Arizona, Tucson; North Carolina State University, Raleigh; and the University of Minnesota Summer School at Duluth. It should be mentioned that the National Association of Extension Home Economists recognizes excellence in public policy education with a substantial award. The American and Western Agricultural Economics associations also have award competitions that recognize Extension public policy programs.

As we move into the 1990s, Extension education services are being transformed to respond to people's concerns about other issues, such as health or trade. Cornell University at Ithaca, New York, is an example. Its College of Human Ecology encourages County Extension agents and subject-matter specialists to work with public policies, such as water quality and housing policy. Titles are even changing to match the work; some are now called Community Issue Program Specialists. Under the project entitled Policy Education for Families, a steering committee of Extension agents, specialists, and administrators guides and encourages these issue-oriented Extension programs.

Roland (1985, p. 1) lists the objectives of this public policy education effort as:

- To build an awareness of the impact of public policy on families and understanding of issues affecting families;
- To promote understanding of the policymaking process and identify strategies to increase involvement in this process;
- To increase individuals' and family members' knowledge of alternatives to and consequences of specific public policy issues; and
- To develop leadership skills as a means of increasing involvement of individuals and family members in the policymaking process.

Across the nation, most Extension policy specialists participate in a network of regional Extension policy education committees. The "glue" that holds the network together is the National Public Policy Education Committee, which is jointly supported by state Extension services and the Farm Foundation. This committee sponsors the annual National Public Policy Education Conference, the primary source of information and training for public policy educators since 1949. The national committee adopted a constitution and by-laws in the late 1970s. Committee membership comprises Extension specialists and directors from each of the four Extension regions, the land-grant institutions, Extension home economics consultants, the Farm Foundation, and the national Cooperative Extension System.

Public policy education began in the 1930s, when agricultural economists were searching for better ways to educate farmers about agricultural policy alternatives. These same methods also were used to help rural residents deal with issues such as rural health, aging, foreign policy, and school consolidations.

The network of public policy educators was, from the first meeting, a partnership between the state Extension services and the Farm Foundation. According to House (1981, p. 3), these conferences and the National Public Policy Education Committee

> had an agricultural image, but the program topics included inflation; the growing interrelationships of agriculture and other segments of the national economy; how agricultural laws are made; international relationships; economics of production; and Old Age and Survivors Insurance.

M. L. Wilson (1949, p 9), then Director of the federal Cooperative Extension Service (formerly Montana's first County Extension agent) set the philosophical tone of public policy education:

> It is not the function of this Committee, or of any other similar group, to determine what agricultural policies shall be adopted. That is the responsibility of the Nation's citizens. Our task is to supply the essential facts affecting farm policy and to make recommendations on the basis of careful analysis of such facts. It is our hope that the men and women on the farms and in the cities will consider these matters carefully, allowing no preconceived loyalties or animosities to becloud the issues, and strive to reach decisions which will cause Americans 10, 20, or 50 years hence to say they reasoned well and acted wisely.

For many years, the National Public Policy Education Committee was concerned with finding ways to involve County Extension agents in public policy education. The dilemma was solved to the partial satisfaction of Committee members through Farm Foundation-sponsored scholarships to public policy courses at the various Extension schools (House, 1981). In the 1970s, the National Committee supported two public policy education projects that provided in-service education for Extension professionals. These were Michigan's project PACE and the "Otter Rock" project conducted by the Western Public Policy Education Committee. In September, 1985, the National Committee unanimously resolved its support for this Module on public policy education.

## Public Policy Education and Extension Administration

The views of some prominent Extension administrators are presented in the videotape, "Introduction to Public Policy Education." These administrators, including Myron Johnsrud, speak in support of Extension educators using public policy education methods to educate the public about public decisions.

When we, as Extension educators, are considering an Extension program on a public decision, we should consult our administrators. They either can be of great assistance, or they can throw up obstacles. Regardless of the response, consulting them can be useful. Each person we consult can give us another perspective about the situation and the likelihood of a successful educational program.

In his paper, "Administrative Considerations Regarding Public Policy Education," (see the Learners' Packet) Siebert (p. 9) asserts that "public policy . . . often is misunderstood by Cooperative Extension administrators." Noting that public policy issues always involve a degree of controversy, Siebert (p. 9) further observes that

> . . . to most administrators, the avoidance of risk is an important goal. [He advises fellow administrators] to minimize risk in public policy programs by making sure that the controversy and conflict surrounding a particular policy issue are objectively addressed and channeled into a positive educational approach.

Siebert defines four functions for administrators to consider. The first is structural: to provide the procedures for assessing situations; assist staff in identifying priorities; and establish support so that needs assessment can be translated into priorities for staff to begin to develop programs. The second function is to motivate and facilitate the formation of public policy issue teams of specialists from relevant disciplines. Third, the budget must be adequate so that the program can reach fruition. And fourth, Extension administrators can lend credibility to the public policy education process.

Siebert (p. 12) also gives administrators, and the rest of us, a good statement of expected outcomes: "The first priority is that whatever consensus is reached in any public policy issue, that it be based on informed decisions." A second goal is that "the outcome accomplishes societal goals." On this point, Siebert states, "The ultimate goal is to assist in developing a policy so that all groups can walk away from the process feeling that they have gained something." Another goal he seeks is the resolution of conflicts among the various interests:

> Finally, the applications of appropriate research and education programs related to public policy issues and the treating of research and Extension programs themselves as public policy issues may improve understanding and support for land-grant university programs. Such an outcome should not be an explicit goal, but rather a consequence of better service and better public and clientele understanding of the role of the land-grant university.

## Others Who Can Help With Public Policy Education

There are probably people in your state or province who have some expertise in public policy education. They can be useful counselors, teammates, or advisors in both your study and your future practice. (Keep in mind that you are looking for educational help, not seeking to form a coalition to participate in politics. The distinction is essential!) Some suggestions of persons to contact are delegates to the annual National Public Policy Education Conference. You will find them listed in the annual conference proceedings *Increasing Understanding of Public Problems and Policies*. They include agents, specialists, and administrators who have been trained in public policy at the Western Extension Winter School in Tucson, Arizona; the Duluth Extension Summer School in Minnesota; the Southern Regional Extension Summer School at North Carolina State University, Raleigh; Public Policy Specialists seminars in Washington, D.C.; the Otter Rock (Western States) and the PACE (Michigan) projects; or the Extension Home Economics Public Policy seminars in Washington, D.C.

## What Public Policy Educators Need to Know

Public policy educators need the following understandings and skills:

- They need to distinguish between decisions that are public and those that are private.
- They need to know how public policy is made. That is, they need to understand politics and to recognize how politics works. They do not have to like politics, but they do have to understand the process.
- They need to know when they are likely to be perceived as acting politically.
- They need to know when they can practice politics and when such practice will compromise their ability to educate.
- They need to be familiar with a variety of models of policymaking and competent in at least one of them. (Competence means the ability to use a model in analyzing an issue.)
- They need to be able to distinguish among facts, myths, and value judgments, and to help others do the same.
- They need to recognize the influences of values and ethics on public policy.
- They need to be able to apply at least one public policy education method.
- They need to be able to design effective public policy education programs.

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The foregoing are the topics of the succeeding units of this Sourcebook. More complete understanding will come from an organized course of study, including the readings listed in the Selected Annotated Bibliography, the List of References, and the Selected Readings.

## "Teachable Moments"

Public policy educators must be aware when a "teachable moment" is at hand. There are times when education is impossible; one must wait. Sometimes there simply is nothing to offer; we either have no information, or the experts do not agree, or there is no one we can rely on. Other times we have good information, but no one is interested. At the other extreme, when interests have reached the pitch of unreasoning conviction, one cannot educate. "Teachable moments" lie in those periods of time between apathy and war.

An issue may be "unteachable" for years; then, within a matter of months, a teachable moment may emerge. For example, over the past 25 years, the sales tax has been a partisan issue in Montana. The Democrats were adamantly opposed, but it was the only tax many Republicans were willing to consider. This situation tended to block education about tax policy, because one could not put all of the alternatives on the table without being viewed as an advocate of the sales tax; and one could not put forth all of the alternatives, except the sales tax, without being considered a tool of the Democratic Party. In 1986, conditions changed. A fiscal crisis of such magnitude occurred that the leadership of the Democratic Party split over the desirability of the sales tax. Within a few months, all of the options were on the table. This example demonstrates how to gear efforts to the times, waiting for that teachable moment to arrive and trying to be ready. It also implies that Extension administrators need to be flexible, too. It helps, of course, if we can keep them informed.

## Summing Up

You have been introduced to public policy education. Have we answered as many questions as we raised? We defined public policy education and distinguished public from private decisions. We said that the world in which we educate is complex: many important decisions are public ones, and these require different educational methods. Strengths and weaknesses of client-oriented and issue-oriented education were recognized.

Now that you have the basic concepts of public policy and how education can improve the public dialogue about it, we will start to build your understanding of that third component of Extension education, the context. The context for public policy education is the political system. To most of us, public policy is made in the mystical world of Washington, D.C., and the role that an Extension agent or specialist might play in policy formulation is obscure, if not inappropriate. It is essential that we understand how public policy is made in America, not only in Washington, but in our state capitals, county courthouses, and city halls. Gaining that understanding is the next objective in this Module.

## Unit II. Models of Public Policymaking: How Public Policy Is Made in America

By **Craig Infanger** and **Mary Ellen Wolfe**

All public policy education efforts begin with an understanding of the systems that produce public policies, laws, and regulations in America. Public policymaking is an important activity at the community, state, and national levels. The systems that produce public policy are complicated and dynamic, but they are the natural product of a democratic society and representative government. Public policies are simply a means for carrying out the people's public business.

To help understand complex systems, scientists develop "models" of the real world, abstractions that simplify things and increase comprehension and ability to predict real-world events. Models are used by social scientists to understand political behavior, and even public policymaking. These models simplify complex public behavior; identify important actors and processes; and bolster understanding of what is most important about public policymaking.

## Some Practical Models of Public Policymaking

Over the years, public administrators, policy analysts, political scientists, and economists have developed dozens of public policy models for the U.S. These models range from academic descriptions of how public policy "ought" to be made, to very practical "real-world" descriptions of public policymaking at local, state, and national levels.

There is no one "correct" model for public policymaking in America because there is no unanimous agreement about all of the variables that interact in the real world of political events, program implementation, and rule making. Several such models are relatively straightforward and appropriate to public policy education in Extension. You may find that you instinctively feel comfortable with one of these models. But at the same time, it is important to recognize that the context of a given situation might be more suited to another model or to a combination of models.

Summarized in the sections that follow are four practical public policymaking models: (1) Kings and Kingmakers, a model that depicts "elites" in our society as really making public policy; (2) the Lindblom model of "Muddling Through," in which public policymaking is described as incremental changes from the past; (3) the Iron Triangle and Ogden's Power Cluster model, group models of public policymaking; and (4) a social process model of the stages of public policy decisionmaking, in which public policy is depicted as being made through a sequential public process (hereinafter referred to as the decision-making process).

### Elite Model (Kings and Kingmakers)

Many observers of U.S. public policymaking argue that, despite assertions that democracy is government by and for the people, public policy is, in fact, the product of powerful, elite citizens. Elite models of public policymaking suggest that a large majority of people are apathetic and poorly informed about public issues. Elites shape public opinion and public policies flow downward from the top to the masses.

One practical statement of an elite public policymaking model is the "Kings and Kingmakers" model by Flinchbaugh (1974), illustrated in Figure 1. In this model, power and public policymaking in every community (or state, or the U.S., for that matter) are depicted as hierarchical.

At the top of the hierarchy are the Kingmakers, those extremely influential persons who operate behind the scenes. They are Kingmakers because they have the financial and intellectual resources to influence public policy in the community, the state, or the nation. The Kingmakers must be sensitive to the attitudes of the people and remain well informed, since mistakes can cost them their position.

Next in the hierarchy are the Kings, the clearly visible public policymakers. The Kings are the elected and appointed leaders in government or organizations with strong interest in public policy. The Kings report to and work closely with the Kingmakers. Just below Kings in the hierarchy is the Active group of citizens: the "joiners" and civic-minded members of a community. These are the people who constitute the active membership of service clubs, special-interest groups, and national organizations, such as the League of Women Voters or the National Farmers Organization. Next in the pyramid is a large group of Interested Citizens who are fairly well informed on community and national matters, but are neither vocal nor active in public affairs.

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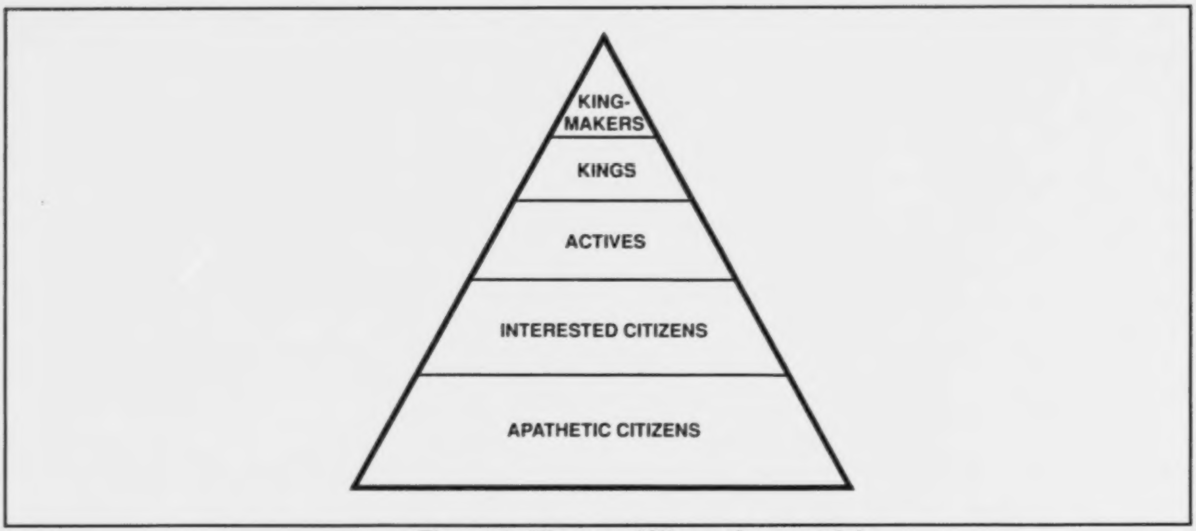

**Figure 1. Kings and Kingmakers model**

At the bottom of the hierarchy are the Apathetic Citizens who, in Flinchbaugh's (1974) descriptive terms, "don't give a damn except under unusual circumstances." They are only aroused when a public issue concerns their backyard or pension.

In this model, the public policy agenda is set by the Kingmakers and determined by the Kings and the Actives. Public policy education, Flinchbaugh argues, is successful only when targeted at the Kings, who, in turn, impart the educational message to the Kingmakers and the Actives.

The Kings and Kingmakers model, as with all elite models, focuses on the role of a select few in society to explain public policymaking. Elite models do not depict all policy decisions as against the masses, but rather that responsibility for the general welfare rests with the few influentials. Mass opinion is influenced by elites, communication flows downward, and the general population thus has only an indirect influence on public policy.

## Incremental Model (Lindblom's "Muddling Through" Model)

One of the most enduring models of public policymaking was developed by political economist Charles E. Lindblom in 1959. Lindblom's work was a reaction to other analysts who constructed elaborate models in which they suggested that public policy should be made by considering everyone's values and beliefs; examining all possible alternatives in a rational, comprehensive manner; and objectively determining the most appropriate means to desired ends: hence the name *rational-comprehensive*. In the real world of public policymaking, Lindblom argues, these "rational" models simply require more time, expense, and knowledge than is possible or practicable. Lindblom challenges the usefulness of such rational-comprehensive models, arguing that they fall short of describing complex realities of public policymaking.

In his Incremental Model, Lindblom argues that, unlike rational-comprehensive models, policymakers do not annually review the whole range of existing public policy; identify goals; research costs and benefits; and select the best policy alternatives. Instead, public policy formulation is first and foremost a product of existing policies and programs. New policy formulation amounts to incremental changes, or in his words, "successive limited comparisons," and not the comprehensive, systematic analysis advocated by more academic models.

He compares public policymaking by contrasting the "root method" (rational-comprehensive) with the "branch method" (incrementalism). In the branch model, public policy is made continually, building out from the current situation, step-by-step and in small degrees, much as twigs develop from the major branches of a tree. On the other hand, in the root model, public policymaking begins anew with each time period, building on the past only for data and experience, and always starting fresh in new policy "soil."

Lindblom's Incremental Model is a conservative approach that considers existing programs, policies, and budgets as a base, and concentrates on explaining new policy as an increase, decrease, or modification of that base. Anderson (1979) summarized the steps in the Lindblom model this way:

1. The selection of goals and objectives is intertwined with the process of analyzing impacts and consequences.

2. The decisionmaker considers only some of all possible alternatives, and these differ only marginally from existing policy.

3. For each alternative, only a limited number of "important" consequences are evaluated.

4. The problems facing public policymakers are continually changing and being redefined. Analysis is always limited, and often important outcomes, alternatives, and values are neglected.

5. There is no single policy that is the "right" solution for the current problem. The test of a good policy is agreement—when public policymakers find themselves agreeing, that policy becomes the most appropriate means.

6. Incremental public policymaking is essentially remedial and geared to treat immediate, concrete social needs rather than to promote future social goals.

Lindblom's model suggests that public policymaking involves many participants who work for mutual consent in problem solving. Since there is uncertainty throughout public policy formulation, participants seek only modifications of existing programs rather than "all or nothing" changes of great magnitude. Thus "something that will work," or as Lindblom called it, "muddling through," is a process that describes limited, practicable, and acceptable public policymaking.

The "comprehensive" farm bills of the past two decades are good illustrations of public policymaking in the incremental fashion. Each farm bill is broad in scope, but contains sections that are marginal adjustments to past policies. For example, the mandatory supply control programs for major commodities were not abruptly dropped. Rather, they were gradually abandoned until only two remain in the 1980s. Congress and the national administration have never advocated a wholesale dismantling of farm programs in order to "start all over again." Instead, as Lindblom argues, they "muddle through" by modifying, adjusting, and tinkering with existing public policy in order to develop one that meets current crises or problems.

## Group Models (Triangles and Clusters)

Public policy formulation is viewed by some as the result of interaction among groups. According to that perspective, existing public policies are the product of the current power struggle among groups. Individuals have little impact on the public policymaking system except as they act through groups. The influence and power of groups are determined by their relative membership, political activity, and wealth.

### The Iron Triangle

Perhaps the best-known and most easily understood group model of public policymaking arose during the middle of this century: the Iron Triangle (see Figure 2). In the original model of the Iron Triangle, decisionmaking on public issues was depicted as being through interaction of three powerful groups: the Executive, the Congress, and the farm lobby (see also Meyer, 1983).

The important factors in this triangle were: (1) the chairmen of the congressional Agriculture and Appropriations committees; (2) the Secretary of Agricul-

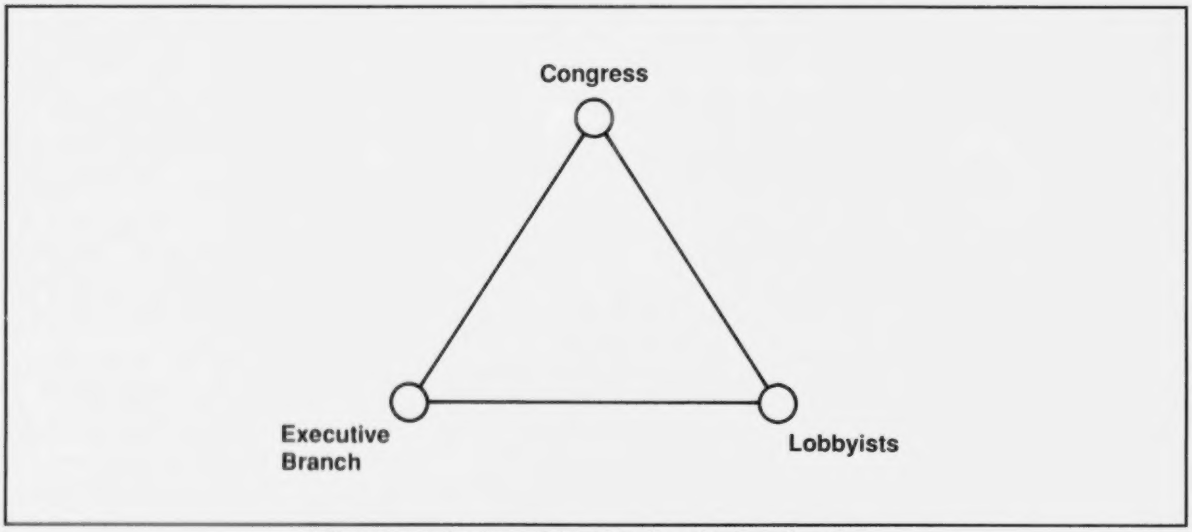

**Figure 2. The Iron Triangle of agricultural policy**

ture, administrators of USDA agencies, and the Director of the Bureau of the Budget; and (3) the leaders of a few key farm organizations and relatively new commodity groups. Within the "triangle" of shared power, the nation's agricultural policy was debated; the legislative agenda was determined; regulations were promulgated; and programs were administered. As a policy model, the Iron Triangle replaced the Farm Bloc as the most viable description of national agricultural policymaking. However, triangles of power are evident in all major public policy areas.

The Iron Triangle for explaining how agricultural policy is made has been very durable. In 1981, the *National Journal*, a highly respected policy publication, used triangles to illustrate the formidable challenges President Reagan faced in changing policy directions in such important fields as transportation, medicine, defense, and housing.

### Power Clusters

Over the past two or three decades, the public policy arena has become so full of new actors that some observers refer to the public policymaking process as a "web of power." Ogden (1971), for example, expanded the Iron Triangle model to one that describes the multiple groups that frequently affect policy from formulation to revision. In his "power cluster" model, Ogden recognizes the complexity of today's public policymaking environment at the community, state, and national levels. Instead of points of power, Ogden describes "clusters," or groups of power and influence in public policymaking. Each cluster deals with one broad policy area, such as agriculture, education, or transportation. Power clusters exist for the most pragmatic and practical of reasons: to influence public policy that affects groups of people at all levels of government, as well as industries or other organizations. Like the Kings and Kingmakers model, power clusters can be observed at all levels of public policymaking from the town hall to the Congress.

**Elements of a Power Cluster.** Power clusters are composed of the following elements: administrative agencies, legislative committees, special-interest groups, professionals, an attentive public, and a latent public, as depicted in Figure 3.

For the national agricultural power cluster, the elements are:

1. *Administrative agencies.* The USDA is the primary department and includes over 40 different agencies, boards, and offices. Most are part of the agriculture power cluster, but some are not. For example, the Forest Service is really a part of the natural resources power cluster.

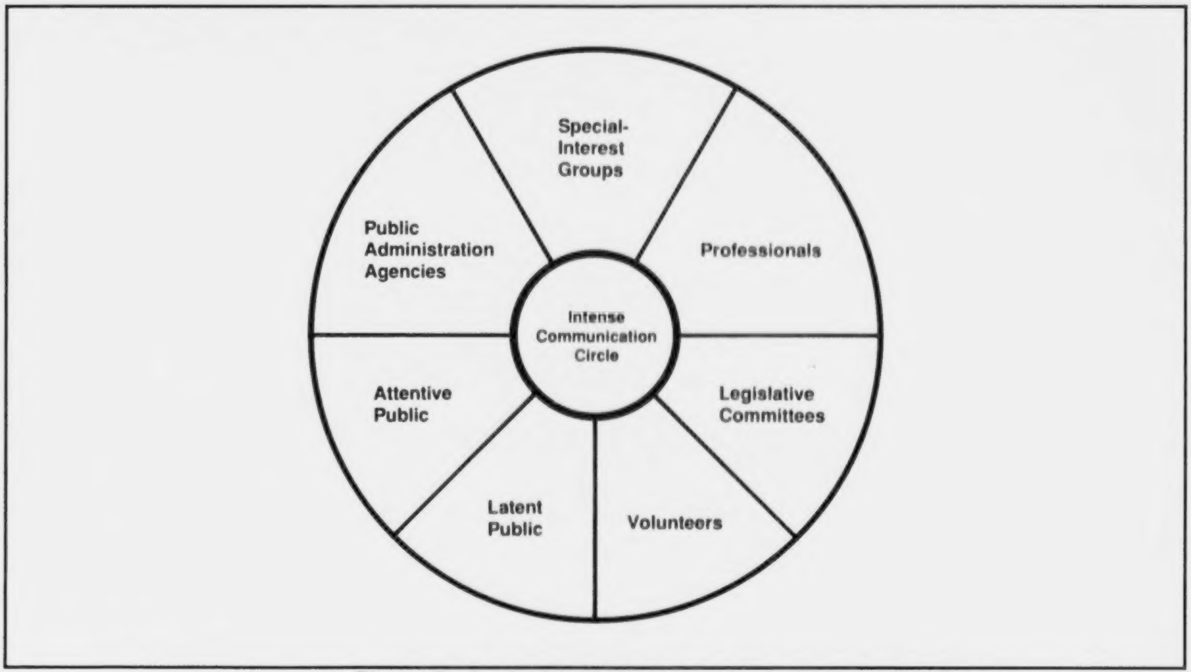

**Figure 3. Agricultural cluster and subcluster example**

Other administrative agencies within the power cluster are found in other parts of Washington, including the Office of Management and Budget, the Office of the Special Trade Representative, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

2. *Legislative committees.* The House and Senate Committees on Agriculture and on Appropriations remain the most important legislative committees. However, since passage of the Budget Act in 1974, the Budget committees now have become important, and they deal with agricultural budget issues early in the congressional cycle each year. With the erosion of the power of the committee chairmen, the subcommittees are where the real action and influence begins.

3. *Special-interest groups.* Any organization intending to influence public policymaking can be considered a special-interest group. These groups maintain relationships with all elements of the cluster. In agriculture, the special-interest groups are the national farm organizations that have "legislative affairs" offices to house their lobbyists, the commodity organizations, the machinery manufacturers, and other related groups.

4. *Professionals.* Among the active participants in any power cluster are the professionals: people with special skills or expertise that make them sought-after participants in public policymaking. These professionals include tax experts, biotechnology scientists, public relations representatives, computerized mail campaigners, and others who provide a specialized service. They testify before congressional committees; prepare media campaigns; draft proposed legislation; and carry out other similar activities.

5. *Attentive public.* Forming the backdrop for all visible national policymaking is an attentive public; citizens who have more than passing interest in agricultural matters. These citizens know the important actors in the cluster; they read newspapers and magazines carefully; and are aware of which issues are currently important to agriculture. Members of the

attentive public are also members of organizations involved with public policymaking issues.

6. *Latent public.* All power clusters have a latent public with only a casual interest in public policy. These people pay little attention to current happenings, for they do not perceive that policies will affect them directly. However, the latent public can be aroused or provoked over important policy changes, such as changes in retirement programs, elimination of traditional government programs, or threats to citizen rights and freedoms.

**Behavior of Power Clusters.** Every power cluster exhibits five types of regular behavior, over time.

1. *Close personal and institutional ties.* All the important actors in the cluster know one another on a first-name basis and maintain friendships despite differing viewpoints, politics, or jobs. Most participants in the power cluster make their careers within the cluster.

2. *Active internal communication.* Effective members of the cluster keep informed by reading the important related publications, newsletters, press releases, and research. They know people within the cluster. A common saying is, "You are only as good as your Rolodex," which refers to the number and closeness of the contacts one has established within the cluster.

3. *Internal conflicts among competing interests.* Power clusters are like most large American families—friendly, but not without differing interests, strongly held opposing viewpoints, and some conflicts. There are perennial differences that do not go away: grain producers versus poultry and cattle feeders, publicly provided irrigation versus private irrigation, rangeland grazing versus environmental and recreation users, and proponents of foreign agricultural technical assistance versus opponents of sharing technology with other countries. These differences are faced on a regular basis and are not causes for major conflict.

4. *Cluster decisionmaking.* Almost all public policy decisions in agriculture are made within the cluster. Members of the cluster are successful when they influence the cluster to the benefit of those whom they serve. Therefore, the agriculture cluster forcefully protects its ability to make agricultural policy. Clusters follow a "live and let live" philosophy, expecting to make their own decisions and not be bothered by other clusters. In congressional debate on the 1985 farm bill, most of the conflict was between opposing farm interests. However, a significant intercluster conflict arose over the cargo preference requirements on grain shipments under the blended credit provisions of P.L. 480, the program that subsidizes grain exports. The merchant marine and agricultural clusters challenged each other, and the former group prevailed.

5. *Internal power structure.* Every cluster has a well-developed power structure, with key leaders recognized by all participants. These leaders are consulted on all major events that affect their areas of interest.

In his model, Ogden describes real political behavior. This can be a bit of a shock to Extension clientele, who have been taught that political parties elect legislators who vote for or against policies on the floor of the legislature. Ogden points out that political parties are involved in the public policymaking system insofar as they affect who will be the policymakers. But, for the most part, policy is made in a nonpartisan manner. (See also Meyer and Dishman, 1983.)

## Social Process Model (The Stages of Decisionmaking)

Some public policy educators view the policymaking process as a sequence of political activities—problem identification, formulation, legitimation, implementation, and evaluation (Jones, 1977). Other public policy educators have adopted this sequential process perspective and developed models that describe a series of social activities that account for citizen participation in the public policy decisionmaking process (Hahn, in Selected Readings).

Hahn's model is a flow chart of stages in the decisionmaking process whereby social conflict resolution takes place to yield a single political decision or public policy. In the model, Hahn points out that public dilemmas are solved through a social process involving a series of sequential activities undertaken by policy advocates and opponents who organize, map strategies, and then petition key authorities to adopt their desired policy perspective. Once the authoritative decision is made, it is implemented, evaluated, and, over time, the whole process begins again. This social process mode of public policy decisionmaking is described in greater detail in Figure 4 and in the paragraphs that follow. (See also Hahn's paper in the Selected Readings.)

**Policy Advocates.** The series of sequential decisionmaking activities undertaken by policy advocates consists of:

1. *Problem recognition.* The policymaking process is begun by "advocates" who recognize an existing problem and attempt to address it. Most often, the problem is noticed first by some government official, but it can also be the byproduct of some citizen-inspired goal or objective regarding "how things should be."

2. *Convergence of interests.* People are brought together by their common perception of a shared problem, when they become aware that their interests converge with those of others. At that point,

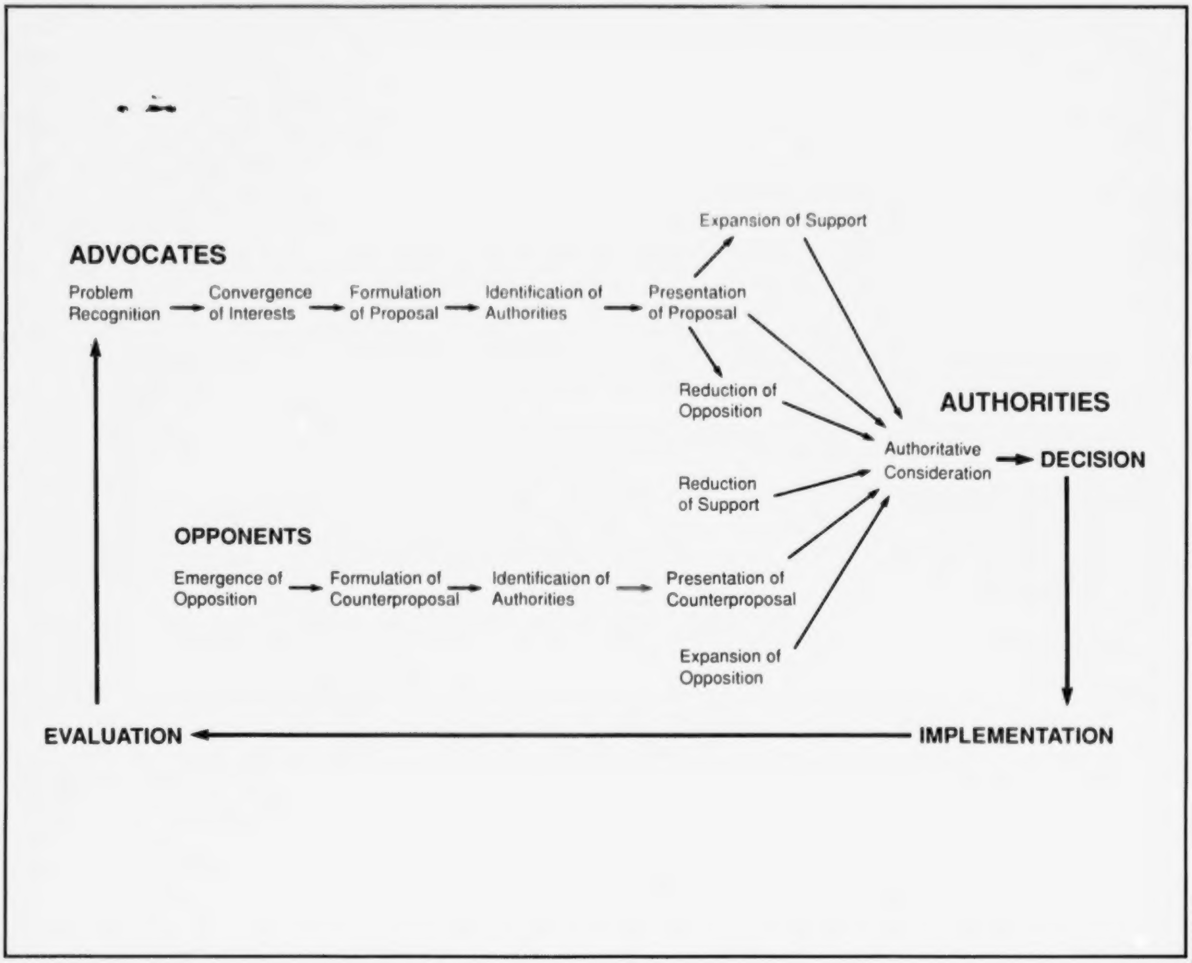

**Figure 4. Stages in the decisionmaking process**

the advocates see the possibility of obtaining a desired resolution to the problem by asserting their combined influence.

3. *Formulation of proposal.* Converging interests organize and formulate a plan of action that addresses their perceived problem.

4. *Development of a strategy.* The key authorities are first identified before determining the most effective plan. The policy advocates then develop a plan that states their proposal in terms that have the best chance of being accepted by those who have authority to make the decision.

5. *Expansion of support.* At this stage of the process, the goal is to solicit or locate the outside support needed to persuade key authorities to make the desired decision. Petition circulation, political advertising, mass meetings, and public endorsements are examples of activities used to expand such support.

6. *Reduction of opposition.* At some stage in the process, advocates of a particular public policy are likely to undertake steps to reduce the effectiveness of their opposition. Through indirect steps, such as merely anticipating the development of an opposition, or more direct steps, such as face-to-face confrontation or negotiation, policy advocates attempt to "defuse" their opposition before it affects their own chances for success.

7. *Presentation of proposal.* The final step in the policy advocates' involvement is to secure a place for their proposal on the policymakers' formal agenda. Most advocates lay some groundwork for this final step as they proceed through the previous six stages, thereby improving their chances for a positive policy outcome.

**Policy Opposition.** The uniqueness of Hahn's social process model lies in the inclusion of the role that opposition forces play in public decisionmaking. In his sequential model, Hahn describes a series of steps that precisely parallel those of the policy advocates, but can arise at any stage of the decisionmaking process:

1. The emergence of opposition,

2. The formulation of a counterproposal,

3. The identification of authorities,

4. The presentation of the counterproposal,

5. The expansion of the opposition, and

6. The presentation of the proposal.

**Authoritative Decision.** When a public issue reaches the formal agenda stage, the next stage is the deliberation that leads to a decision. The authorities can agree to consider the issue or decline to do so. They can approve the proposal or reject it. They can adopt a counterproposal or table the entire matter. In short, at this point, numerous outcomes are possible.

**Implementation.** When a decision is made and the problem is considered resolved, the decisionmaking process next requires an action to implement the decision. Such action can mean the establishment of a different routine in the existing governmental process, the creation of a new body of regulations, or the development of a new agency and new procedures. Whatever the action involves, at some point existing or new advocates or forces of opposition come to the forefront as the "final" stage, policy evaluation, is begun.

**Policy Evaluation.** The proposed policy can be evaluated either formally or through informal citizen reactions to new routines and regulations. Such evaluation can lead to satisfaction with new procedures and policies or to dissatisfaction. Dissatisfaction is seen as a new problem, and the decisionmaking cycle begins again.

Unlike political scientist Jones's (1977) process model, in which he stresses the formal, ritualistic actions taken by government, Hahn's decisionmaking model focuses on how the people affect decisionmaking. The model, therefore, is useful for individuals interested in learning how to play a more effective role in the public policy decisionmaking process.

## Comparing Public Policymaking Models

Models of public policymaking are useful tools to help clarify thinking about politics and public policy. They also help to:

- Identify important aspects of public policy problems;
- Focus on significant features of political life;
- Differentiate between important and unimportant events in the public policymaking process; and
- Suggest explanations for public policy and help in predicting its consequences.

The public policy educator will find it useful to be familiar with the preceding four models of policymaking, for each offers a different perspective of how public policy is made. Some educators will prefer one model over another, but no one model says it all. In focusing on certain aspects of the policymaking process, other aspects are, of necessity, omitted.

By comparing the characteristics of each model, the focus, use, and limitations of each become more apparent. The educator should compare models before designing public policy programs, and select the one that will be most useful in serving the foregoing functions. Some of the models also will teach participants about the public policy process itself. The key characteristics to consider in selecting a policymaking model are outlined in Figure 5.

## Public Policymaking Models and Extension Education

Political scientist Thomas Dye (1981) suggests ways to judge whether or not a public policymaking model will be helpful in understanding how public policy is made in America. He outlines general criteria to judge the usefulness of particular models under specific circumstances:

1. Is the model useful in ordering and simplifying the public policymaking environment? Some models may be too complex for public policy education purposes, while others may be too simplistic for a particular situation.

2. Are the really significant aspects of public policy formulation identified in the model? To be useful to a public policy educator, a model must focus the attention of the learners on the important aspects of public policymaking. What is "important" is a judgment, of course, and a function of individual values.

3. Does the model relate to the real-world processes and public policy decisionmaking? If a model is focused on a nonexistent public policy process or symbolizes actions that do not really occur, the model is of limited usefulness to public policy educators.

4. Are meaningful concepts and ideas about public policymaking communicated in the model? For example, if no one agrees on what constitutes an "elite," then the concept of an elite is not meaningful in an educational setting. In applying policymaking models, one model may be more meaningful to a county or community setting versus a national one. Whatever model is most meaningful in a particular setting should be determined by its ability to communicate.

5. Is an explanation of public policy as well as a description of policy formulation included in the model? If a model contains only a description of the system that produces public policy, it will not enable learners to think about causes and consequences of change in policy. The more a model helps learners understand the "why" of public policy, the more useful it will be in an educational setting.

Finally, one of the best things about the public policymaking system in America is that, whether you describe it with elite, incremental, group, or social process models, it is open and accessible to new groups and individuals. Since the system

| Model | Focus | Use | Limitations |
|---|---|---|---|
| Kings and kingmakers | Who has the power? (Elites) | Describes the role of leaders; reveals hidden power-brokers who influence public policy. | May overstate the role of elites; may understate the role of groups and the multidimensional nature of policymaking; can be hard to identify the elites over time. |
| Power Clusters | Who has the power? (Groups) | Describes the central role of groups; allows for incrementalism. | May overstate the group role and understate the role of public officials and institutions; may overlook environmental factors. |
| Rational-Comprehensive | How are decisions made? (Rationally, comprehensively) | Describes a rational "scientific" decisionmaking process. | May be unrealistic; exaggerate the time, resources, and information available to the decisionmaker; may not take group or elite power into account. (Highly abstract) |
| "Muddling Through" | How are decisions made? (Incrementally) | Highlights the manner in which officials make decisions. | May overlook the role of elites, systematic stages in the process, and possibility of innovative policy changes. (Highly abstract) |
| Stages in the Decisionmaking Process | What are the regularly occurring stages in the decisionmaking process? | Describes the process or system; multiple decision points, fragmentation of power. | May overlook changes in the social, political environment; content of the process may be overlooked. Does not identify the actors. |

Figure 5. Key characteristics to consider in selecting a public policymaking model

**Figure 5. Key characteristics to consider in selecting a public policymaking model**

is open, the more you know about the system and its operation, the more effective will be your participation. This is one more way in which effective public policy education can contribute to the well-being of Extension education's clientele.

**Objectivity is the mother of credibility. If the policy educator is to be effective and viable, he or she must attain credibility and maintain it, once it is achieved. People must listen to you and believe what you say if you are to be effective.**

## Unit III. Facts, Myths, Values, Ethics, and Advocacy

By **Verne W. House**

The title of this unit invites consideration of several related aspects of public policy and the role of the Extension educator. First, we will discuss facts, myths, and values; then we will talk about ethics; and, last, advocacy. The information presented here is drawn mainly from Barrows, Cordes, and Hildreth and Johnson, which are in the Selected Readings for this Module, and Flinchbaugh (1974) in the Selected Annotated Bibliography.

### Facts, Myths, and Values in Public Policy

**"There are many sources of credibility. One that some policy educators have used is trust based on acquaintance and mutual respect. Perhaps the most dependable ally for the educator is information derived from scientific methods. A behavior that is particularly important for the policy educator is to let people choose their own solutions. Credibility can also come from the reputation of the institution with which you work and evidence that you are using the latest equipment and techniques to secure information."**
**—House (1981, p. 31)**

Most Extension educators—agents or specialists—see themselves as providers of factual information. We try to give people the latest and best information; help them to explore the implications of such knowledge; and encourage them to adopt more effective technology. So we deal in facts. We challenge myths with facts. This is serious, hard work—it is challenging teaching.

When Extension educators encounter controversies about public decisions, they have to contend with two factors that are even more difficult than myths, i.e., values and ethics. These factors are familiar terms in an unfamiliar context.

[*Note:* The Selected Readings are excellent resources; they require thoughtful reading, but understanding them will reward you. If you have the option of viewing Flinchbaugh's videotape on this subject, prepared for this Module, it presents the same message as his paper.]

There are many theories about how people form an opinion about a public issue. For example, Lindblom's (1959) "rational comprehensivists" would have us think that people base their opinions on nothing but hard facts. Lindblom created an easy target; almost any theory would seem more realistic. Our opinions are actually based on facts, some myths that we think are facts, and our values. Thus, it is imperative that we sharpen our skills at separating facts, myths, and value judgments. So, how do we distinguish among the three, and what are the implications for public policy education?

A *fact* is a verifiable statement of what is. Different analysts can come up with essentially the same results. Another way of stating it is that the evidence is generally accepted in the scientific community. Flinchbaugh argues that a *myth* is treated the same way as a fact in the public policymaking process. Why? Because a myth is what people think is fact. It is what people perceive to be true; but is, in reality, inaccurate, incomplete, or false. According to Flinchbaugh (1974, p. 4), "the real purpose of policy education is to establish facts that destroy mythology."

Although Flinchbaugh talks in terms of facts and myths, Cordes uses the terms "factual beliefs" and "perceived beliefs." They are saying the same thing. Some writers view facts as what people believe to be true, based on factual analysis. But what people perceive to be true is often myth. Different terms—about the same meaning, for our purposes here.

*Values* are standards of desirability. Values are what we deem "should be," and usually are stated in terms of good or bad, beautiful or ugly, or similar polarities, that cannot be proven right or wrong by scientific methods. One man's ugly is another's work of art, and there is no objective way to choose between them. Cordes (see Selected Readings) says that

> Values are greatly influenced by the expectations of those around us and by the day-to-day perceptions, experiences, and observations in the physical, biological, and social worlds in which each of us

> operates. Because each person is unique in terms of his or her perceptions, experiences, and observations, value conflicts are to be expected and are, indeed, the source of most of the friction in dealing with public problems.

One characteristic of a policy issue is that a group decision is required. Flinchbaugh (1974, p. 2) expands this definition by emphasizing the point that the solutions are based on value judgments; i.e.,

> If we can settle the problem through scientific analysis . . . it's not a public problem. Public problems involve value judgments in order to arrive at solutions.

The authors all agree on this point: value conflicts lie at the heart of controversy over public policy. The question is, "What should we do about value conflicts?" To answer this question, we must look to ethics.

## Ethics and Public Policy

The language gets a little more complex in Hildreth and Johnson's "Understanding Values and Ethics in Public Policy Education" (see Selected Readings), but the message is worth the extra effort it takes to understand what ethics means. Why? Let us review! We can deal with facts scientifically. Myths we try to replace with facts. Disagreements about policy alternatives lie in value conflicts. We cannot deal with values "scientifically." So how is public policy to be determined? Must education yield to the exercise of political power, i.e., influence, propaganda, and persuasion? Is science all the academic community has to offer?

There comes a time when withdrawal is precisely what Extension professionals do. When they have done their part (or when the "teachable moment" has passed), they get out of the arena and let the people decide. But there is an aspect that has not yet been dealt with—decision rules.

Looked at this way, decisions depend on facts (beliefs), values, and ethics. When the facts and values lead us to expect one decision, but the system produces another, we probably did not anticipate the ethics of the decision. According to Hildreth and Johnson (see Selected Readings),

> Ethics deals with the correctness of decisions about what ought to be done. . . . Value information distinguishes between goodness and badness, while ethics deals with the prescription of rightness and wrongness.

This statement comes close to saying that ethics tells us whether we will choose to do good or bad.

Hildreth and Johnson's terminology varies a bit from that of Flinchbaugh and Cordes. The former define two kinds of information: (1) value-free positive information and (2) value knowledge or normative information.

*Value-free positive information.* Scientific methods are used to develop factual information that is as value-free as possible. The function of science is to discover what is; what will be; or what could be. Reporting that the number of single-parent families is increasing is value-free, positive information.

*Value knowledge or normative information.* We can identify, describe, and classify values, but we cannot analyze them scientifically. We could ignore this information, but it exists and it guides preferences for public policy. Value information deals with the goodness and badness of what is, what will be, or what could be. And Hildreth and Johnson (see Selected Readings) say that value information "is commonly allied with humanistic information and is subjective." Value information about single-parent families will be concerned with poverty among children, decline of the traditional family structure, and similar issues.

For our purposes, we can substitute the term "facts" for value-free positive information and "values" for value knowledge or normative information.

The language of Hildreth and Johnson clarifies the difference between the two. Why is this difference important? Because part of the job of the Extension educator is to help people separate facts from beliefs and values. The identification of values will make compromise among divergent interest groups easier.

It may seem at this point that the subject is covered. But it is not. Suppose that (1) there is general agreement on the facts related to a policy issue; and (2) the various value positions have surfaced and been identified. How will the decision be made? By politics? Yes, but that is too simple an answer.

Ethics has to do with moral judgments of preferred courses of action. These terms can be charted simply:

**Fact:** What is, will be, could be

**Value:** Desirability, goodness/badness

**Ethic:** What ought to be done

One's ethics may be at odds with one's values. Hildreth and Johnson use the example of a physician's treatment of an illness. A patient has a serious illness (that is a fact). The treatment has negative side effects (that, too, is a fact), but the patient desires it (values come into play). The treatment is prescribed (ethics determines the policy) because the goodness of the treatment is deemed to outweigh the badness of the side effects.

Another example: In her videotape, County Agent Edie Felts-Grabarski related her involvement in a school breakfast program. She guided concerned parents to assemble the facts: children were coming to school without breakfast; nutrition studies link students' performance to breakfast; and so forth. She helped them identify alternative solutions and research the consequences of each. Values were very diverse: parents should be made responsible; the school has to deal with what is received; the government does too much already; a county so food-rich should not let children be nutrition-poor. Assembling facts and surfacing values is just that; the process is not the same as deciding. *Deciding* is the application of ethics to values and facts of a situation via some decision rule.

A different example: scientific studies show that public funds invested in Project T would stimulate tax revenues greater than the cost (Fact). The Chamber of Commerce and other interest groups resolve their support of the project (Values). But the legislature chooses not to fund Project T, because there is an alternative that is perceived to have a larger payoff or more widespread public benefit. It may be ethically correct to choose *not* to do good by funding Project T.

These examples demonstrate that there is more to analyzing public policy than meets the eye. Most of our work as Extension professionals has probably dealt with scientific information. Values may be a new arena. We should exercise care in judging the wisdom of a public policy decision or the motives of those involved.

What are the implications here for public policy education? A few are listed; discussion with Extension colleagues may well produce others.

1. It is important to replace myths with facts. This is much more effective if you have credibility with both the scientists and the policymakers.

2. Work objectively with value information, too. Objectivity requires analyzing your own values and your resistance to the views of others when they appear to conflict with yours. An objective Extension educator will remain neutral and work to create a receptive mind; generate respect for the values of all involved; and help separate facts from values.

3. Explore the implications of various decision rules with those affected. For example, on questions of tax policy, compare alternatives based on ability to pay versus benefits to users. Or, on a question of public investment, see that appropriate net benefits measures are used.

4. Help develop policy prescriptions that work. You will learn more about this in subsequent units of this Module.

**Work objectively with value information, too. Objectivity requires analyzing your own values and your resistance to the views of others when they appear to conflict with yours. An objective Extension educator must remain neutral and work to create a receptive mind; generate respect for the values of all involved; and help separate facts from values.**

## Avocacy in Public Policy Education

In Unit IV, "Roles for Public Policy Educators," are listed several roles that public policy educators can play. Notably absent is the role of advocate. If you have read Barrows's (n.d.) "Public Policy Education," in the Instructional Aids, you already know why. [*Note:* "Public Policy Education" is essential reading for understanding about advocacy.] Throughout this Module there are admonitions against advocacy. Does this mean we stand for nothing? Are we only human chalkboards upon which information is written for others to read?

Advocacy is essential to the practice of politics. It is also appropriate in some aspects of education. But it is inappropriate and usually counterproductive in public policy education.

The reasons for avoiding the advocate's role become clear when we examine the common rationalizations for it: (1) we have more expertise than others; (2) our values are superior to others; (3) our ethics are superior to others; (4) we represent students or clients who cannot adequately represent themselves. The first rationale is that of the expert; it may provide some credibility. The second is elitist; it will be met with disdain. The third rationale may be demonstrated logically—if anyone will listen. The fourth is the role of lawyer or saviour, both important to society, but neither is an educational role because it tries to tell people what to think rather than helping people help themselves.

As public policy educators, we are human, too. We have values. Some of what we think is fact may be myth. Most of us are advocates of education, representative government, Extension education as part of the land-grant system, freedom of religion, free enterprise, maintaining law and order, children, and the goodness of life, among others. Do these values make it impossible for Extension educators to be public policy educators? Of course not!

Let us take a specific example. Most Extension agents and specialists are perceived as members of the agricultural establishment. They are, in the language of Ogden's (1971) model, part of the agricultural "power cluster." Suppose the use of insecticides is challenged by an individual or an organization not directly affiliated with agriculture. Agriculturists tend to respond as if such critics have no right to raise questions about what they do.

Where is the County Extension agent in this? Can he or she deal with this issue? The nonagricultural critics are not likely to seek help from the agricultural power cluster. And what does the power cluster ask the Extension agent? "Go enlighten this 'granola.' Make him butt out!" In more sophisticated terms, the agent will be pressured to help undercut the critic's credibility and to help isolate and silence him—in short, to become involved in politics for one interest group. The Extension agent either does the bidding of his or her agricultural clients, or is caught between clients and the critics who do not trust the agent.

This is a grim picture. If you, the learner, are satisfied that you know what to do in this case, you need not read on. If you want to know ways to build the relationships and the image that will let you go ahead with Extension education, you will get many good ideas from the subsequent units of this Module.

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# Unit IV. Roles for Public Policy Educators

By **Ardis Armstrong Young**

Just as there are many ways to teach and to learn, there are many roles the Extension educator can assume when conducting nonformal public policy education programs. In this unit, five different roles the Extension educator might take when designing a program are identified and defined.

At one time, a mystique surrounded public policy education. Many Extension educators believed that, because of its potentially risky nature, public policy education should be conducted by only a few "totally objective scientists" who would lecture or write on public policy issues in their disciplines. Recently, however, it has been recognized that most Extension educators routinely build programs around topics that have public policy implications and, in a variety of ways, provide public policy education experiences for clients.

The Extension educator roles described here are the (1) forecaster or futurist, (2) adviser or consultant, (3) process trainer, (4) information provider, and (5) program developer.

## Forecaster

Nothing is permanent except change. And change is important to consider when planning curriculums for Extension programs. Extension educators who read, listen, and analyze what is happening around them can predict that certain issues will soon need to be addressed. They have an advantage in preparing programs and materials that will be timely and relevant. The forecaster-educator systematically looks into the future to get ideas that will allow education to address new issues as they emerge, rather than merely reacting when it is too late.

Zentner (1984, p. 25) defines the emerging public issue as "(a) one having direct or indirect impact on society; (b) one that is not currently on social, legislative, or regulatory agendas; but (c) one that will be on such agendas within several years." An example of a situation that signaled an emerging issue is the drought of 1976–77. The issue that has, indeed, emerged is: How will water, as a scarce resource, be allocated to ensure national well-being? In 1986, a barge of garbage that no landfill would accept traveled up and back down the Mississippi River for weeks; this barge may well be symbolic of an emergent, broad, complex (and smelly) public issue.

Several Extension educators, operating in the "forecaster" mode, detected this emerging landfill issue and began developing educational programs to address it in the early 1980s. As a result, Extension programming in some parts of the U.S. is on the cutting edge—ready to provide citizen decisionmakers with good information and processes for making sound public policy decisions.

A variety of "futuring" or forecasting techniques can be used. Scanning the news over time, a system used by John Naisbitt (1982) to write *Megatrends*, is one method. Surveys and other public opinion instruments also provide forecasting data. Studying demographic trends that are routinely monitored and reported by private researchers or the federal government is an excellent way to develop background for making educated predictions on which to base future Extension programming efforts. [*Note:* For more recommended methods, refer to **Module 7: Techniques for Futures Perspectives**.]

## Adviser

Advising, a time-honored activity of Extension educators, is a role often used in public policy education. The Extension educator has many opportunities to help individuals and groups " sift the facts" so they can make judgments and decisions based on their own value systems. The adviser role is becoming even more important as the quantity of information and the number of information sources on nearly every topic increase. Information abounds, but sorting out that information, verifying its reliability, and applying it to the situation at hand is a challenge. Because these activities are a vital part of the public policymaking process, objective Extension advisers are badly needed in our society.

The adviser role combines teaching, research, and facilitation skills. The role requires that the Extension educator be able to understand current research findings on the topic and communicate them clearly through speaking and writing. The role also requires analysis, synthesis, and evaluation skills (Gray, 1984).

Extension educators often play the adviser role. The role is not new, nor is it limited to public policy activity. The adviser role differs in public policy education in the degree of objectivity required. For example, advising a group on the use of parliamentary procedure or on rapeseed planting practices is generally not as prone to controversy as advising a city council on tax alternatives and consequences. In the latter situation, the adviser's objectivity must be beyond reproach.

## Process Trainer and Facilitator

In Unit II, "Models of Policymaking," we were reminded that public policy is generally made through group processes. In America, classic democratic principles call for an open process, in which people, or their representatives, have access to the system. Extension educators can help assure this openness by facilitating involvement, and by training others to work with groups in examining public issues. [*Note:* For methods and ideas about group processes, see **Module 5: Working With Groups and Organizations**.]

In addition to providing process training to individuals who are, or want to become, involved in public decisionmaking, Extension educators often serve as process facilitators. Facilitators are invaluable when citizen group discussions have the potential for getting too heated or out of hand. Since this can happen when strong opinions are being expressed, Extension educators trained in group process can design the format for a meeting; set the ground rules; and facilitate the discussion in such a way that people are heard and conflict is minimized. This role is used frequently in community development programs. In public policy education, the facilitator focuses on the decisionmaking process, unaligned with any of the advocacy groups involved.

Training in group process is usually experiential. These experiences take place in groups, where group members learn techniques and behaviors that encourage discussion of thoughts and feelings and techniques for generating new, creative ideas for solving problems. It also teaches methods for making decisions that can be satisfying to all group members.

## Information Provider

At some points in the evolution of public policy education, providing information is the most appropriate role for the Extension educator. In public policy education, the information provider serves the vital function of giving citizens and policymakers unbiased facts on which to base their decisions. For that reason, it is an extremely important role.

There is a multitude of information sources today—public data banks, research institutes, computerized libraries, to name a few. Facts and figures spew at the public daily from the mass media; but, even with the many choices we now have for acquiring knowledge, Extension remains one of the few sources for nonbiased information. Equally valuable are Extension professionals who can help interpret what the facts might mean in different contexts. It is the Extension information provider who can present to the public an array of choices or alternatives for solving problems based on what is both realistic and possible.

For the Extension educator to use only the information provider role and yet consider himself or herself a well-rounded public policy educator would be misleading. As Barrows (See Instructional Aids) states:

> Scientific knowledge, the wisdom of the university, cannot be used to determine the "correct" policy choice for society because science cannot supply the value judgment that ranks the interests of one group as more important than the interests of others.

## Program Developer

A "program" is an educational design that consists of a series of related episodes, activities, or learning projects (Tough, 1971) that is deliberately designed to assist the learner in reaching specific goals. Program developers, then, are the architects of these learning systems.

Often programs are thought of as single events. "I went to a program on day care today"; "There was a marvelous program about the Smithsonian on television last night"; or "We have been asked to put on a nutrition program for the Wheat Growers meeting on Tuesday." These statements illustrate short-range plans of action rather than a long-range program (Boone, 1985).

In public policy education, program developers generally assume the responsibility for both long-range program planning and much of the implementation of short-range actions. They become, in other words, "total educators." They assess needs, plan and design a learning system around a specific content area, and implement and evaluate the resulting programs.

This holistic approach to design and implementation is especially important in public policy education because public concerns and issues develop over time. Addressing them through education requires that the educator persistently scan the horizon to determine "teachable moments" as an issue evolves. When such moments occur, the program must be ready and relevant.

These five roles—forecaster, adviser, process trainer, information provider, and program developer—give the Extension educator an array of tools from which to choose. Whatever the role used, the Extension educator can benefit from remembering and employing the qualities that are basic to public policy education in Extension. These qualities are objectivity, sensitivity, appropriate timing, and the ability to deal constructively with conflict. The following is a good guide (Heider, 1985, p. 12):

> Can you mediate emotional issues without taking sides or picking favorites? . . .
>
> Are your own conflicts clarified?. . .
>
> Can you remain open and receptive, no matter what issues arise? . . .
>
> Can you know what is emerging, yet keep your peace while others discover for themselves? . . .
>
> You can do this if you remain unbiased, clear, and down-to earth.

These roles are filled every day by Extension professionals who offer practical, down-to-earth education about public decisions. Public policy education occurs when an economist provides information at a series of public meetings on a tax issue. Extension agents and specialists serve as forecasters or advisers when they work with a board of farm co-op directors in developing policy that will keep the organization vigorous and effective in the future. Many roles—adviser, process trainer, program developer—come into play in carrying out a leadership program that will increase public involvement in policy decisions. [*Note:* These situations are portrayed in the videotape, "Policy Educators in Extension: Roles and Approaches," prepared for this Module.]

Often the public policy education role is so closely integrated with a program area that it may not seem a separate responsibility at all. Extension home economists and community developers have traditionally taught their clients about the public policy decisions that affect nutrition, the family, and community growth. New initiatives, client needs, and changing publics are currently calling for public policy education in every program area. Agricultural Extension agents help entire communities plan how to balance urban and rural growth and how best to conserve and exploit natural resources. Areas that once seemed "rational and technical," such as water conservation, pesticide use, or woodland management, have become issues that can polarize communities. By using diverse approaches and employing a variety of teaching and leadership roles, all within a well-planned public policy education program, Extension educators can improve client participation in public policymaking.

## Unit V. Public Policy Education Methods

**ByVerne W. House**

To this point in the discussion of public policy education, the materials you have read have enabled you to (1) describe an issue or situation, inventorying who will be affected; (2) analyze the politics surrounding the policy issue; (3) separate facts, myths, and values, and distinguish education from advocacy; and, finally, (4) consider the variety of roles that can be played by public policy educators. This is a great deal of content in a few pages!

The next step is to consider methods appropriate to educating about public policy. Just as no single model of policymaking is appropriate for all situations, no one model, method, or strategy fits all educational programs. Why a variety? There are three reasons (Frost, 1978, p. iv):

> . . . (a) there are a number of alternative approaches to teaching; (b) teaching methods make a difference in what is learned and how well it is learned; and (c) students are a powerful part of learning and react differently to each different teaching method.

There are additional criteria for choosing methods for public policy education. Since these methods are used to design educational programs that deal with controversial issues, they must let Extension educators deal with controversy without themselves becoming controversial. The usefulness of these criteria rests on how well they help us bridge the gap between politics and education. Methods must take into account the realities of policymaking but propel us into a nonadvocacy, objective, educational role. That is a large order! This does not mean that policy education methods must be revolutionary. They are simply effective Extension education methods adapted to cope with special conditions. With practice, they can help Extension educators avoid being surprised by controversy. And, when we can anticipate controversy, we can make better decisions about the proper role for the Extension educator. Most of us prefer to choose whether or not and how to be involved in issues. These methods suggest means for designing public policy education programs.

Six public policy education methods are surveyed here. [*Note:* See "Comparing Public Policy Education Methods"—Fact Sheet in Learners' Packet.] You do not need to be able to use all of them, but you should have a repertoire of methods that allows you to select the method that best fits the situation. The basic assumptions in each of these methods are that (1) you have some understanding of the political behavior of the group(s) you hope to educate, and (2) the group(s) has confidence in your objectivity and fairness.

### Public Policy Education Methods

The six public policy education methods are: (1) the Issue Evolution–Educational Intervention model; (2) SHAPES; (3) the California Group Decision Process; (4) Alternatives and Consequences; (5) the Cornell Planning Matrix; and (6) the Iowa Public Affairs Planning model. The rudiments of each method are set forth here and summarized in Fact Sheets. You will find quite a variety here. Some fit one situation better than others; some are more theoretical; and some, more practical. At the end of this survey, all six methods are compared.

[*Note:* Videotapes on the first four methods listed here are part of the Instructional Aids for this Module.]

## Issue Evolution–Educational Intervention

Ever since Charles Gratto developed the Issue Evolution–Educational Intervention model in 1973, it has been widely used and adapted to teach the concepts of public policy education (see Figure 6). It was the first explicit integration of the educational possibilities of political events into a methodology for program design. As implied by its title, Gratto's model is actually two models in one. It is a model of both public policymaking and public policy education. First described in the model is how issues evolve through political action. Then, ways that Extension educators may intervene at each stage of the issue cycle are set forth.

[*Note:* The Issue Evolution–Education Intervention model is presented in more detail in the videotape, Fact Sheet, and Selected Readings prepared for this Module.]

As presented in the model, issue evolution is quite consistent with other methods of public policymaking. The process begins with an individual motivated to seek change in some perceived condition. If the issue is to evolve, others must become involved. As the

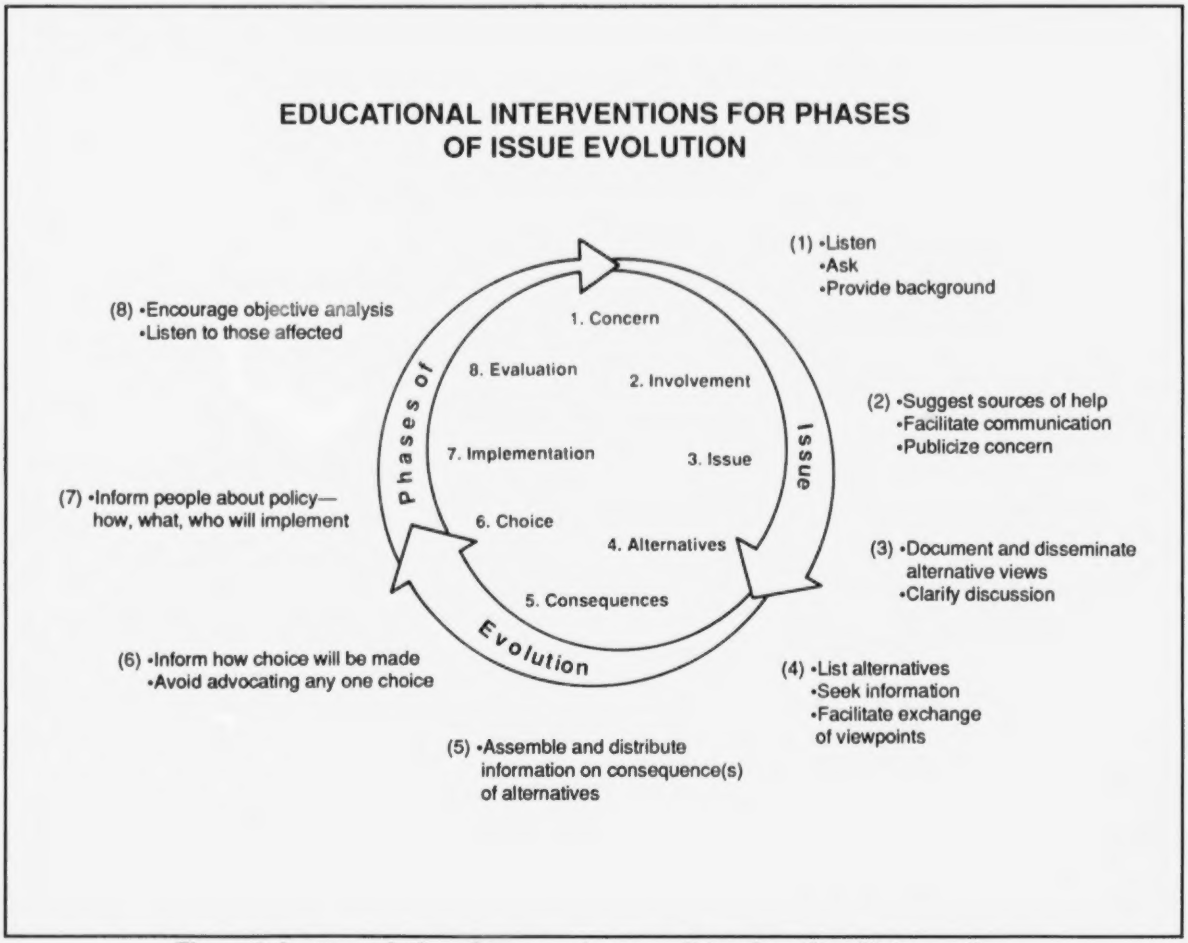
EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTIONS FOR PHASES OF ISSUE EVOLUTION
Phases of Issue Evolution
1. Concern
2. Involvement
3. Issue
4. Alternatives
5. Consequences
6. Choice
7. Implementation
8. Evaluation
(1) •Listen •Ask •Provide background
(2) •Suggest sources of help •Facilitate communication •Publicize concern
(3) •Document and disseminate alternative views •Clarify discussion
(4) •List alternatives •Seek information •Facilitate exchange of viewpoints
(5) •Assemble and distribute information on consequence(s) of alternatives
(6) •Inform how choice will be made •Avoid advocating any one choice
(7) •Inform people about policy— how, what, who will implement
(8) •Encourage objective analysis •Listen to those affected

**Figure 6. Issue evolution phases and appropriate educational intervention**

group discusses the concern, it tends to become renamed and reshaped by group perception and the necessities of communication. If this group action has a clarifying effect, an issue will emerge.

With the emergence of an issue come ideas for its solution. For example, here is a statement of concern: "The reason that taxes are so high is that there are too many people on welfare." This often is followed by a statement that says, "And here's what we ought to do about that." As an issue is discussed, various ideas come forth. In our culture, people tend to define a problem in terms of their solution, not necessarily one that they think will work, but one that they prefer. And, just as naturally, the reaction to the presentation of the solution is its judgment. We may not say so, but the reaction to hearing someone tell us "what we ought to do about that!" is to evaluate. We immediately try to imagine what the consequences of that solution would be. Perhaps a new policy will be developed. Or, we may stay with the status quo. Either way, we will continue to evaluate how the policy affects us or other things important to us. Unless people see a way to make some improvement, the issue will revert to a concern. It may or may not emerge into an issue again. Obviously, there is much more certainty about the emergence of butterflies than about the evolution of social policy.

Issue evolution is the base upon which Gratto (1973) built the educational intervention half of his model. Educational intervention is actually a close look at the possible responses that might be open to the Extension agent or specialist at each stage in an issue's "life cycle."

The advantages of the Issue Evolution–Educational Intervention method or model lie in the power it gives one to understand better what is going on (the issue evolution half of the cycle), and thereby improve one's ability to choose an effective response. The educational intervention half of the model helps to identify methods from which we may choose. Different methods are appropriate at different stages of the issue, as illustrated in Figure 6. The term, "educational intervention,"does not imply that the Extension educator should intervene. Indeed, just as one of the options open to the public is to do nothing (maintain the status quo), one of the Extension educator's response options is to do nothing. The model does not require intervention, but it does reaffirm the prohibition against advocating any one solution.

The Issue Evolution–Educational Intervention model has been very useful to many public policy educators.

## SHAPES, Egan Style

The Shared Process Evaluation System (SHAPES) was developed at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education by Lynn Davie, Terry Patterson, Dorothy McKeracher, and Richard Cawley (1982). SHAPES is not well-known to public policy educators, perhaps because it was developed as a tool for evaluation rather than program design. It provides a method of documenting what is involved in a public issue, over time, and the interaction among those people and groups.

Charles E. "Chuck" Egan, a Montana County Extension Agent, revised SHAPES by combining it with the social action process developed by Beal (1958). SHAPES is a matrix. The rows are the steps of the social action process: (1) identify the prior situation; (2) clarify the problem; (3) form initiating set; (4) legitimize; (5) diffuse the information; (6) evaluate as you proceed; (7) define need; (8) get commitments to action; (9) determine goals and (10) means; (11) make a plan of work; (12) mobilize resources; (13) launch the program; (14) take action; and (15) evaluate. The social action process is a progenitor of the "Stages" model in Unit II (see Figure 4). Fifteen steps may seem complicated, but the model is easy to use and to communicate to others.

Basic assumptions in the SHAPES model are (Davie et al., 1982, p. 2): "(1) activity is cyclical over time: one phase of activity arises out of another and flows into activity that follows, and (2) not all parties will be involved in every phase." The path of a project is traced through time by identifying the "critical incidents," or important events that occurred. SHAPES provides a method of

(1) displaying the interaction of those involved over time and events and (2) identifying those who might stop the process because they are affected, but not involved.

SHAPES has been used creatively in many Montana Extension education programs. Egan began to experiment with the model when he was trying to help his county find a way to handle its solid wastes. The state had condemned the county dump, and no acceptable new sites were available. Egan began an awareness program that evolved into a program to identify alternatives and consequences. When his program ran into opposition, he used SHAPES to identify all parties involved and classify them in various ways. This process produced information that was used to redesign his program so that it kept moving ahead. Thereafter, he continued his SHAPES charts (a piece of butcher paper that grew to the length of an anaconda) to monitor and redesign. [*Note:* This specific application is described in the videotape and Fact Sheet, "SHAPES, Egan Style."]

In practice, Egan begins his process by "brainstorming" the definition of the problem with a few confidants. First, they list who will be affected and why. This yields an inventory of people who might become the target audience. Then they make a second list, one in which they try to anticipate the course of events. If Egan decides to offer an educational program, he will make a large matrix with social action steps down the left axis. As critical events occur, they are entered, in sequence, along the top of the matrix. He puts this SHAPES chart on a large piece of butcher or art paper. This homely chart appears always to be a draft rather than a finished product. He may or may not display this chart. If he does, its appearance and size invite people to express their ideas.

## California's Group Decision Process

Over the past several years, L. Tim Wallace has worked with numerous groups and commissions that are trying to shape their future before it shapes them. Most public policy educators are asked, from time to time, to help groups develop public policy recommendations. Anyone who has been involved in such activity knows that the role of moderator can be hard work. Wallace and his colleagues have developed a group decisionmaking process that works very well for a strongly motivated group. The process has been taught to some public policy specialists and tested in new situations. It can be used for an individual policymaking retreat, but is more effective if the group can have a series of meetings. Increased chances for acceptable policy result from both group continuity over time and a good, systematic process.

The California Group Decision Process relies on the dynamic energy and intelligence of the participants. The moderator must know the process and be comfortable with a "free-wheeling" situation. He or she must have considerable faith

The Group Decision Process begins with the task of coming to agreement about the situation. But, unlike most such models, it proceeds directly to setting goals. The first three steps are posed as questions that only appear simple:

| *Question* | *Outcome* |
|---|---|
| 1. What is? | 1. Group agreement on the situation. |
| 2. What should be? | 2. Group agreement on the goals. |
| 3. How can we get from "what is" to "what should be"? | 3. This is the problem. Identify alternatives and consequences. |

Steps 4, 5, and 6 are to choose a plan of action: implement it; and evaluate.

that the process will give the group a good chance of coming to agreement. Human relations skills and patience are necessary. One must be nonjudgmental to make the brainstorming work, as well as willing to wait to give information until it is requested.

The Group Decision Process is similar to the social action process in that the Extension educator must be willing to let the group define the goal(s). The difference is that, in the Group Decision Process, once the goal and action plan have been determined, it is not assumed that the Extension educator will be a party to carrying out the action. The process simply provides a logical system for involving a group of people in solving a problem. The role of political involvement or advocacy that has become associated (perhaps in error) with the traditional social action is not a part of the Group Decision Process.

In this model, the process trainer role in public policy education is emphasized over that of information provider or expert. Some participants will want to have complete data and agree on terminology before beginning any public involvement process. They may initially perceive this model as lacking concern about the quality and utility of information. As this process begins, the focus is not on research of data, but on reaching agreement on the situation.

However, as the process unfolds, information needs are defined and terminology is clarified en route. Some people may think this is like drawing a map to the destination, after the group is already on the bus. But it does avoid the opposite problem: realizing that you have boarded the bus with a map in hand, only to find that the group wants to go somewhere else, or cannot agree about its destination.

This Group Decision Process was developed to structure an ongoing group or a task force formed to examine alternative ways of providing health care to a community or water development for a state. Implied are (1) a common interest in the topic among group members (but not necessarily agreement on solutions); (2) a willingness to consider alternatives; and (3) an expectation that engaging in the process can make a difference in or shape their future.

This process also has been used successfully in an individual conference. Although all of the steps could not be completed during the conference, the process got the participants to consider more alternatives. When using this, or any other group decision process in "one-shot" meetings, it is best to create expectations among participants that progress will be made, even if all steps cannot be completed. It is better to adjust expectations at the beginning of the meeting than to appear to be rationalizing at the end of the meeting.

As Wallace uses this process, he documents everything on newsprint where everyone can see and refer back to it. He calls this "the group memory." All views on the subject are encouraged and recorded without judgment; repetition is discouraged, as it tends to polarize viewpoints and increase frustration. Flexibility is encouraged. The group can always go back to adjust what is said before. These rules reduce anxiety about completeness and accuracy. The visual accumulation of the group's work on the wall charts also gives a feeling of accomplishment and stimulates thought. Such conditions may well lead to commitment to a follow-up session.

This Group Decision Process requires that some topic be identified that will cause the group to meet. It does not require agreement on the definition of the issue. The process begins by reaching agreement on the situation ("what is"). The fluidity of this process makes it difficult for the Extension educator to play the role of expert, because it is hard to predict what information will be needed. Also, if the Extension educator is the moderator, it is hard to double as expert without seeming to evaluate participants' opinions. One option for this situation is to use a team approach in which one Extension educator serves as process facilitator and another functions in the role of expert adviser.

## Alternatives and Consequences

''Alternatives'' and ''consequences'' are the two most important words in public policy education. They are key concepts in Gratto's model. But they are presented as a separate method to provide a full understanding of their use in public policy education. [*Note:* This method is also presented in the videotape and the Selected Reading, ''How to Do Policy Education: The 'Ten Commandments,''' prepared for this Module.]

The secret of life for most public policy educators is a seemingly simple process. First, define the problem in terms that are topical, but not divisive. That is, it makes a big difference *how* you state the issue. For example, in Montana, the sales tax issue has long polarized voters along party lines. When economic changes brought sales tax to public attention, the question had to be phrased just right. If we had asked, ''Does Montana need a sales tax?'' the question would have been answered by reflex. But when we defined the problem as, ''It's time to make some decisions about taxes,'' we were able to deal with it educationally.

Once the problem is stated so that it is clearly understood to be unavoidable, alternative solutions will emerge. There are three educational opportunities at this stage: (1) help to define the problem; (2) encourage the identification and understanding of alternative solutions to the problem, and collect, clarify, and publicize them; and (3) help inform people about the consequences of each alternative—provide the best information available.

The alternatives-consequences method also fits within some other models. They are not mutually exclusive. For example, in the Issue Evolution–Educational Intervention model, when the issue is emerging, the best educational opportunities are to provide information about the consequences of alternative solutions. The Group Decision Process encourages consideration of alternatives. The same is true of SHAPES, although their inclusion there is less obvious.

Successful use of the alternatives-consequences model requires that the audience or participants should not be able to tell which alternative you, the educator, think is best. This is sometimes a heavy burden, especially when reporters and program planners prefer the sensationalism that advocates generate. But use of the alternatives-consequences method yields big dividends of credibility.

The following is an example of how Edie Felts-Grabarski, a Wisconsin county Extension agent, applied the alternatives-consequences method to a diet-health issue. Diet-health issues are highly controversial and emotional. They may involve serious conflict with Extension's traditional clientele. Should government simply provide public information on diet-health issues, or should it regulate behavior? How much should government intervene in private decisions, such as red meat production levels? The scientific community has produced inconclusive evidence surrounding most of the controversy, making it even more difficult to handle in a public policy education program. These conditions underline the need to use this traditional model to remain as objective as humanly possible, and to refrain from touting a ''best'' alternative solution.

Public policy education programs were conducted in a sparsely populated, rural Wisconsin county. The results provided evidence that the model works and can be effective in educating a broad base of Extension's clientele on diet-health issues. Examples are: the food program for women, infants, and children (WIC); the school breakfast program; a special school milk program; and deleting home economics from high school curriculums. A series of alternatives and their consequences, developed with regard to the school breakfast program in one Wisconsin county, are described in Figure 7.

**PROBLEM:** Forty-five percent of all county children under the age of 13 go to school without breakfast.

**ALTERNATIVES and CONSEQUENCES**

**A.** Provide parent education classes in nutrition education

1. Parents in greatest need may not be reached
2. Parents may increase nutrition knowledge, thus provide better meals for their families
3. "Education" concept may appeal to parent group and develop into network
4. Parents may become more conscious of need and feed their children breakfast

**B.** Provide a USDA-subsidized school breakfast program

1. All children will have the opportunity to eat breakfast at school
2. Taxes may rise
3. School system may have to adjust bus schedules, cooking and maintenance staff to accommodate such a program .

**C.** Locally subsidize low-income families so they can financially afford to serve breakfast

1. Some needy families may not accept the stipend due to "pride"
2. Some families may now be able to purchase food for breakfast
3. Local tax base may rise
4. Subsidies may not encourage parents to feed their children if the reason is more than economic

**D.** Delay bus schedule and school starting time

1. Children will have more time in the morning to eat breakfast if they desire
2. Parents will have more opportunity to interact and encourage breakfast
3. School day will end later in the afternoon and conflict with extracurricular activities

**E.** Children/home provide a "sack breakfast" to eat upon arrival at school or during midmorning break

1. "Sack breakfast" may not be provided if food is not available to child
2. "Sack breakfast" may not be provided if parent and/or child lack skills to prepare meal
3. Will provide breakfast to children who prefer not to eat immediately upon rising
4. Before school or midmorning breaks would have to be arranged

**F.** Do nothing about the problem

1. Some children (45%) will continue to come to school hungry
2. Some children may have learning deficits due to lack of breakfast (Iowa breakfast studies)
3. Problem will not be brought to the attention of those who make public policy
4. Conflict will be avoided

**G.** Send children who wish to eat breakfast to a local restaurant

1. Children with money can afford to eat out
2. Local restaurants may compete for business

**Figure 7. Example of the alternatives—consequences of the County Breakfast Policy Education program**
SOURCE: Flinchbaugh and Felts-Grabarski (1985, pp. 161–165)

## Cornell's Program Planning Matrix

One reason that Egan's adaptation of SHAPES appeals to many Extension educators is that it provides a graphic way to analyze what is going on with an issue, and communicate it to others. A relatively simple matrix designed by public policy educators at Cornell University has a similar appeal. They use the matrix, first, to "talk through" or analyze an issue. Then they use a revised form of the matrix to identify educational opportunities and to speculate, in a systematic way, about what would result if each were done. This simple matrix is really a powerful organizing device. It is unique among public policy education tools, for it emphasizes delivering public policy education programs to three audience levels—individuals and families, groups and organizations, and public policymakers.

Public policy educators at Cornell use the matrix to structure discussion and help identify educational opportunities. They are then in a better position to commit educational resources where they are most likely to be effective.

Extension educators need to be able to bridge the gap between public issues and public policy education possibilities. That is, we need to relate the two so that our educational programs will be effective. Any issue can be analyzed using Cornell's Program Planning Matrix. The matrix has two parts. First, it is used to document the situation. [*Note:* As you work with this first matrix, you might find it useful to consider what stage the issue is in; such information may make it easier to understand your issue.] In the second part, Extension program alternatives are listed and their potential effects are noted.

Organized logically, this matrix provides objective information on which to base a judgment about proceeding with a public policy education program. It also provides written information for communicating with administrators and others involved. [*Note:* For more complete information, see the Fact Sheet: "A Worksheet for Planning a Comprehensive Education Program on Community Issues."]

## Iowa's Public Policy Program Planning Model

Some public policy education programs may be aimed at a specific group, the members of which most likely will determine the solution of an issue. In cases in which the target audience is much broader and more basic understanding of the issue needs to be created, a different approach is needed. Iowa State University has an elaborate model for planning such statewide public affairs programs that focuses considerable resources on an issue for two or three years. The model, developed by Wallace Ogg, Eber Eldridge, Charles Gratto, and Ron Powers, is described in 10 steps.

1. Select a problem that concerns people across the state.

2. Identify research needs and obtain commitment.

3. Organize two steering committees for (a) teaching outline and methods and (b) delivery organization and audience recruitment.

4. Preparations: (a) teaching materials and (b) organize; provide instructions for: county staff to select leaders, self-administered discussion groups, use of Fact Sheets, opinionnaire, use of media material, and audience recruitment.

5. Legitimize and create interest (personal visits, letters to organizations, media promotion).

6. Establish a meeting schedule.

7. Synchronize the meetings with media.

8. Collect and summarize opinionnaires.

9. Report to participants.

10. Follow-up evaluation.

Iowa State University began using this planning model in the late 1950s. Broad issues are chosen, usually allowing two

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years of lead time. The typical mode of outreach is a series of conferences, each totaling 12 to 15 hours of instruction.

Issues usually are multifaceted, so the staffing assignments are multidisciplinary. Faculty assignments are juggled so as to apply the best talent to the task chosen. The University's president is informed early in the process as to program goals and resource needs. The process also systematically collects information about peoples' opinions.

The commitment of resources over an extended period of time requires a high level of administrative support, so it is not undertaken lightly. Iowa State is considering using the model to educate about change associated with the emerging structure of agriculture.

The outline of the 10 steps in the Iowa model is a checklist for a very complete educational program. It also anticipates controversy, so everyone responsible is informed early to prevent surprises.

## Choosing a Method

When several methods for approaching a public issue are presented, it is normal to ask: "How do I know which one to use?" The wisest answer is: "It matters less which method you use, than that you use one." In other words, it is most important that you choose a systematic approach, a structure that you can communicate to others and that will encourage participation by those affected while it identifies your role in public policymaking as educator.

The six public policy education methods summarized herein are similar in several ways. They all assume that issues evolve. They all help identify educational aspects of issues. They help us to analyze opportunities for education but, with the exception of the Group Decision Process, they do not specify the educational methods to be used. Their most obvious similarity is that the concept of alternatives and consequences overlays all of the methods; so, too, does concern for objectivity.

These six methods also differ in some ways. For certain audiences, you may find one superior to others. Some methods may seem easier for you to use. Some require more advanced work by research and Extension than others; some require no information, other than what the participants have or are willing to acquire during the process.

The Iowa and Cornell models imply agreement on a topic at the highest administrative level, and commitment of educational resources. That both models have been used demonstrates that their use is possible. The Group Decision Process requires strong "people skills" and administrative support for the Extension educator to become involved with a group of people who want to develop public policy. Some of these methods may seem formidable. But there are methods here that any one of us can use. The Issue Evolution-Educational Intervention model is easy to use. So are SHAPES and the Cornell matrix. And, the alternatives-consequences approach can be used by virtually every Extension educator.

None of the methods here stands alone. Just as public policy education is a process that supports Extension's work in its many areas with its varied audiences, so, too, do its methods call upon expertise in other domains. Many of these skills and knowledge areas are addressed in other modules of *Working With Our Publics*. Interpersonal skills are vital, and are treated in **Module 3: Developing Leadership**. The public policy educator also must be adept in analyzing situations (the topic of Module 4), and in working with groups and organizations (Module 5). Finally, an overall grasp of the Extension education process is a prerequisite for good public policy education, and this is presented in **Module 2: The Extension Education Process.** One of our tasks is to identify emerging issues; Module 7 provides methods of doing this.

## Seven Steps to Plan a Public Policy Education Program

Most of the information about planning Extension public policy programs is presented in the Learners' Packet and in the exercises prepared for Module leaders. Program planning is summarized here in seven steps. In the seventh step, you will be asked to design your public policy education program by spelling it out on paper. The seven program-planning steps presented here correspond to the seven evaluation exercises, one of which is at the beginning of the Module; the others are at the end of each of the five units.

When you want to explore the need for an educational program on a public decision that is important to your community or state, following the seven steps ensures logical program planning.

**Step 1**. Identify a concern in your community or state that is likely to require a public decision. Write a brief description of it. Is the concern due to internal or external forces? Is the concern what it appears to be, or is there some underlying issue?

**Step 2**. Document the history, as well as the current situation.

a. *Involvement.* When an issue arises, one is likely to focus first on the current situation. One wants to know who is involved and why; what seemed to generate the issue; and so forth. These are appropriate questions. But most issues have a history in the area; in one form or another, they have been around before. For example, concern about land use pops back into the spotlight every few years. In the 1960s, it was called environmentalism. In the 1970s, huge purchases of our grain stocks by Russia and China created the fear that we had to preserve our agricultural land base. By 1987, we had so much production and such small exports that we were seriously considering paying farmers 87 percent of their wheat payment on condition that they not plant their wheat base. The land use issue is not dead, however. It will come back, perhaps under a different label, but it will come back. So we need to know not only what the current situation is, but also the history of the issue.

b. *Community connections.* A more personal history of an issue is needed, too. One needs to know who was involved in similar issues in earlier years. An example comes from Egan's solid waste case study (Unit V). When Egan's educational program was under way, an older gentleman in the community began objecting to it. This was unexpected. An important bit of history came to light. Many years before, the county had looked for a dump site, and this gentleman had donated one. But that had been forgotten, so no one thought to consult him when the state condemned all the sites currently being used. Information about family and business connections likewise can be important.

c. *Make a political involvement inventory of the issue.* Categorize the inventory by using these questions: First, who will be affected? Second, who will be involved? Third, who is likely to determine the outcome? Fourth, what is the locus of the decision? And fifth, what is motivating those involved?

**Step 3.** Analyze the politics of the issue. Use one of the models of public policy-making to try to see how the public is working on the issue. What organizations are affected? Are new organizations being formed? What influential individuals are involved? Is your land-grant institution affected? Have other educators been involved in this issue? Where is the locus of the decision?

**Step 4**. Consider information, values, and advocacy.

a. Inventory the "information" about the issue. Which of it is fact? Myth? Try to categorize the "educational" activities being conducted into those that are persuasive; those that are propaganda; and those that are education. What research has been or is being done on the issue? How credible is the research? How can you access it? How much work is involved in interpreting the research for your audience? Can you do it?

b. What values are involved? Are the values espoused by the executive directors of organizations as strongly held by the organizations' leaders? What educational values are involved?

c. What is your reputation with those involved in this issue? How will you be perceived? Advocate for? Advocate against? Neutral? Objective? No history with them? What is your institution's reputation with them? How about your predecessor and your colleagues? How will their reputations affect your ability to educate about this public issue?

**Step 5**. What educational role is appropriate? Is the need principally for information? For a forecast? Can you fill the role? If not, can you access someone who can?

**Step 6**. Select a method for planning an educational program. Compare the information you have accumulated to each of the methods. Which method will give you the best summary of the issue? Which will best define the educational possibilities? Which one gives the best indicators of how involvement compares to those affected? Which one gives the best perspective on the appropriate scope for an educational program? Which one suggests likely results from an educational program? Which ones can you implement, using either your own resources or resources available to you?

**Step 7**. Design the educational program. Will you proceed to offer a program? You may need to complete this step and consult administrators and peers before you decide. Either way, you will need to decide just how the education should be "packaged." What medium will be used? TV? A conference? Consultations? A series of meetings? Publications? What information is available? How usable is it, or what is required to make it usable with your audience? How will you reach the audience(s)? How will you monitor audience involvement? You may have answered some of these questions in earlier steps. Now, it is necessary to pull the information together into a program design. The guides in the Learners' Packet will be helpful.

## Encouragement

While there has been a continuous and widespread practice of the methods of public policy education for about four decades, most of the literature has been about the practice, rather than the methods. In **Education for Public Decisions**, we have summed up what is known about the methods. There is more to discover. The methods will change to reflect the changes in the ways that our learners communicate and otherwise relate to each other, especially in the practice of politics. But, these basic philosophies behind the methods will endure, along with our form of government:

- It is the function of education to prepare all members of society to participate in their own governance.
- Effective citizenship requires knowledge about group behavior, communications skills, incentive, and information about the subjects being debated.
- The public will have fundamental disagreements about the role of government.
- The two most important words in public policy education will continue to be *alternatives* and *consequences*.
- The most valuable asset to educate about public decisionmaking will continue to be scientifically developed information.
- This information has been made available to you by decisionmakers who believe it is important; you will use it if and when you find it useful.

We encourage you to apply what you have learned in **Education for Public Decisions**. It will make your Extension programs more effective. And, it will enable you to educate about controversial matters, without you or your institution becoming the focus of controversy.

## Selected Annotated Bibliography

By **Craig Infanger**

In the last decade or so, the amount of printed material on public policy education and other sources of such information has increased considerably. This increase reflects a growing interest in public policy education efforts not only by Extension agents and specialists who see the need to conduct public policy education programs, but also by new Extension clientele who are interested in a broad range of public policy issues at the national, state, and community levels. Listed here are a few of the best readings and information sources that would be useful to those Extension professionals who want to pursue their professional interest in conducting public policy education programs at the local or state level.

### Policy Statement on Public Policy Education

***Public Policy Education in Extension Home Economics.* 1984. Task Force on Public Policy Education, ECOP Subcommittee on Home Economics. Ithaca, N.Y.: Media Services Printing, Cooperative Extension Service, Cornell University.**
To reflect the increased involvement of Extension home economics in public affairs and public policy education, ECOP appointed a special task force to develop a systematic statement on that matter. This booklet is the product of the task force, and provides historical perspective as well as the rationale for public policy education within Extension home economics programs.

**Wyckoff, J.F., and Everett Peterson. 1979. *Public Policy Education.* ECOP Subcommittee on Community Research Development and Public Affairs. Washington, D.C.: Cooperative Extension System, U.S. Department of Agriculture.**
The Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP) is the policymaking body for the Cooperative Extension System. This publication represents the most recent official statement of ECOP policy on public policy education as a program effort within Extension, replacing the October, 1969, statement titled, *Public Affairs Education.* The Extension Director or public policy education specialist in each state should have a copy. In practice, this piece has been replaced by Barrows' (n.d.) *Public Policy Education*, but this remains the official statement of Extension policy on public policy education.

### Readings on Public Policy Education Fundamentals

**Barrows, Richard. (n.d.) *Public Policy Education.* NCR -203, North Central Regional Extension Publications. Madison: NCR Educational Materials Project, University of Wisconsin.**
This is the first publication every Extension professional should read if interested in pursuing public policy education. Written by an experienced public policy educator, it is a succinct overview of the key concepts and methods, as well as the philosophical basis, for Extension involvement in public policy education.

**House, Verne W. 1981. *Shaping Public Policy: The Educator's Role.* Bozeman, Mont.: Westridge Publishing.**
This is an excellent source of practical, readable information about public policymaking and public policy education. The author covers most of the public policymaking models and links these with public policy education program development.

***Increasing Understanding of Public Problems and Policies.* 1987. Oak Brook, Ill.: Farm Foundation.**
This annual publication is sent from the Farm Foundation to all County Extension offices. It contains the proceedings of the Annual National Public Con-

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ference and focuses on public policy education and current public policy issues. Authors include prominent policymakers and opinion makers from national and regional levels, as well as Extension professionals who are conducting innovative public policy education efforts. The style and language are very readable, and it is a good resource for Extension agents and specialists. The focus of this publication is not restricted to agricultural policy, or to agricultural economists, or to subject-matter specialists.

## Readings on Public Policymaking

**Anderson, James E. 1979. *Public Policymaking*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.**
In this fairly brief and well-written book, Anderson provides a comprehensive overview of public policymaking models, behavior, and the public policymaking environment. Chapter 1, "The Study of Public Policy," would be useful reading for most public policy educators.

**Flinchbaugh, Barry L. 1974. "How to Handle Public Issues in an Educational Framework." Address delivered to the Annual Meeting of the Association of Administrators of Home Economics, Dallas, Texas.**
In this address, Flinchbaugh developed the theory of "Kings and Kingmakers," which he popularized and which is often quoted by other public policy educators.

**Meyer, Neil L., and William T. Dishman. 1984. *Power Clusters: How Public Policy Originates*. Bull. 628.Moscow: Cooperative Extension Service, University of Idaho.**
A brief overview and application of the Ogden Power Cluster Model to the situation in one state.

**Ogden, Daniel M., Jr. 1971. "How National Policy Is Made." In *Increasing Understanding of Public Problems and Policies —1971*. Oak Brook, Ill.: Farm Foundation.**
Ogden's is a classic statement of the power cluster theory, one of the most practical and understandable models of political and public policymaking behavior. Revised versions of this same paper are available from other sources, one of the most recent being a paper, by the same title, published in a collection of related papers as the Staff Paper, "Policymaking and Public Policy Education: A Washington Workshop for Extension Educators," edited by Roy A. Carriker, Department of Food and Resource Economics, University of Florida, Gainesville.

## Home Economics and Public Education

***Family Community Leadership Regional Resource Notebook*. 1984. Corvallis: Western Development Center, Oregon State University.**
These materials are the product of a regional project on leadership development and public policy education. The notebook contains more than 180 entries, including background papers and group exercises. The public policy section contains materials on defining issues, analyzing issues, planning courses of action, and influencing policymaking.

**Hawkins, Leo F. *The Impact of Policy Decision on Families: A Guidebook for Extension Agents*. 1978. HE 216. Raleigh: North Carolina Agricultural Extension Service.**
This publication is intended for Extension professionals and interested citizens as a source of background material and teaching outlines for educational programs related to public policy decisions and family environments.

**_Public Policy Education: An Issues Approach_ (April, 1985) _and Resources in Public Policy Education for Extension Home Economics_ (September, 1985), two publications of the Task Force on Public Policy Education, ECOP Subcommittee on Home Economics. Ithaca, N.Y.: Media Services Printing, Cooperative Extension Service, Cornell University.**
These booklets are designed to assist Extension home economists in understanding and conducting public policy education programs. The former booklet is a step-by-step program development guide using a question and answer approach. The latter booklet is a source guide for printed and audiovisual materials. Although aimed at the Extension home economist, these booklets would be useful to many Extension professionals.

## Conflict Management and Public Policy Education

**_Coping With Conflict: Strategies for Extension Community Development and Public Policy Professionals._ 1979. Ames: North Central Regional Centerfor Rural Development, Iowa State University.**
This publication contains the proceedings of a regional conference aimed at community development and public policy education for Extension professionals. An excellent source of information and ideas on a topic that is a source of concern for all Extension public policy educators.

**Robinson, Jerry W., and Roy A. Clifford. n.d. _Conflict Management in Community Groups._ NCR-36-5, North Central Regional Extension Publications. Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois.**
Jerry Robinson has a long history of working with Extension professionals on problem solving and training for conflict management. This booklet helps readers understand the functions and nature of conflict and develop skills for coping with conflict.

## Evaluations of Public Policy Education Programs

**Howell, Robert E., I. L. Lee, and A.K. Cook. 1979. _Public Affairs Leadership Development: An Impact Assessment of Programs Conducted in California, Michigan, Montana, and Pennsylvania._ Pullman: Department of Rural Sociology, Washington State University.**
This publication is a report of research conducted in four public affairs leadership development programs sponsored by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. It contains a good overview and details on each of the programs. This would be a useful publication for any Extension professional who is contemplating a systematic leadership development program.

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**Working With Our Publics**

Module 6: Education for Public Decisions

# Leader's Guide

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## Introduction to the Leader's Guide

Your Leader's Guide provides detailed suggestions for teaching **Module 6: Education for Public Decisions.** The contents of the Module are reviewed later in this Introduction. First, the developers of this Module ask you to recognize that the subject matter dealt with here is quite different from the academic experience of most Extension educators. It also is a new dimension of Extension education for most of its potential teachers. In designing **Education for Public Decisions**, we assumed that our leaders and learners have only a limited background in political science or the economics of the public sector.

This Module represents a quantum leap in the literature of public policy education. For the first time, the many concepts and ideas are assembled into a set of materials that can be used to teach all Extension agents and specialists. There have long been many good papers, proceedings, and so forth, on that topic. Most of this scattered literature has been synthesized and is presented in this Module as a self-contained, teaching package. Whereas we have only been capable of teaching public policy education to a few score per year, we now have the capability to teach thousands. And many of these materials can be used to teach non-Extension persons, too.

We strongly recommend that you familiarize yourself with *all* of the materials in this Module before you plan how to teach them. In particular, we ask that you study the Sourcebook, the Selected Readings, and the materials in the Selected Annotated Bibliography, so that you can decide whether or not your intended audiences will require the more detailed content of the latter.

## What You Will Find in This Leader's Guide

**Module 6: Education for Public Decisions** is designed for 18 hours of learning experience. The Module is organized into five units to be taught in the sequence in which they are presented herein. Even if you feel that you, the leader, have an advanced audience, we recommend that you begin with Unit I.

The evaluations in this Module are dual purpose. They give information about the learner's comprehension and ability. Simultaneously, they give each learner practice in applying the lessons of each unit to an issue that the learner chooses. When all of the evaluation experiences are completed, the learner will have accumulated a complete study and analysis of his or her chosen issue and designed public policy education activities relative to it.

Following is a brief list of the components of **Education for Public Decisions**, and of the contents of the Leader's Guide.

Components of the Module are:

1. Sourcebook: Introduction, objectives, a synthesis of content, a Selected Annotated Bibliography, and a List of References.

2. Leader's Guide: Recommendations, exercises, directive questions, and other information useful for teaching the contents of the Module.

3. Learners' Packet: Fact Sheets, references, handouts, and other materials the learner will need to study and take home.

4. Instructional Aids: Videotapes, transparency masters, charts, and other audiovisuals that support the teaching and provide alternate media for learners.

5. Selected Readings: These selected readings provide essential ideas and background. Essential for leaders and highly recommended for learners.

This Leader's Guide contains five units. Each unit is composed of the following:

1. The Leader's Teaching Plan that provides the following, in outline form:

- The concept to be taught;
- An introduction to the unit;
- The amount of time required to cover the unit materials;
- A Schedule of Activities that contains objectives, methods, responsibility, resources (audiovisual, newsprint, etc.), and times required;
- Resources that leaders will need to teach the unit:
  - —materials and equipment;
  - —the titles and locations of publications and evaluation exercises;
  - —videotapes and transparencies; and
  - —relevant selected readings.

2. The Leader's Teaching Materials that provide:

- Mini-lectures;
- Exercises;
- Directive Questions; and
- The worksheets, Fact Sheets, and other materials necessary for each unit.

## Unit Plans, With Time Guide

| | Target schedule (hours) |
|---|---|
| I. Introduction to Public Policy Education | 2:00 |
| II. Models of Policymaking: How Public Policy Is Made in America | 4:00 |
| III. Facts, Myths, Values, Ethics, and Advocacy | 3:00 |
| IV. Roles for Public Policy Educators | 1:00 |
| V. Public Policy Education Methods | 8:00 |
| Total | 18:00 |

## Assumptions for Module 6: Education for Public Decisions

The methods, activities, and materials presented in this Leader's Guide are based upon several assumptions about adult learning and public policy education. Those assumptions are the following:

1. A systematic approach to designing public policy adult education programs will help the learner develop creative ways to deal with public controversy.

2. Learners sometimes find it difficult to differentiate among political advocacy, promotion of Extension education, and public policy education.

4. An understanding of the theories and models on which public policy education is based improves the learner's ability to carry out effective programs.

5. This is the first systematic exposure the learners have had to public policy education.

6. The units of this Module will be taught in the sequence in which they are presented herein.

7. This Module can be used for self-study, or in a workshop or seminar format.

## The Evaluation Process for Education for Public Decisions

The Module evaluation process requires that learners write a description of a current public issue and bring it with them to the first learning session. (If they do not do so, the first evaluation exercise will help them identify one.) The goal of the evaluation process is to ascertain whether or not the learners can relate what they have learned to their own situations in Extension. The issue they identify at the beginning of Unit I will be used in each successive unit. That issue will serve as the basis for all the module evaluation exercises that help participants put their public policy education learning into practice.

The evaluation process, shown schematically in Figure 1, creates periodic communications from learners to leaders and back again. If learners perform as requested, the risk of inadequate performance will be reduced because the leader will know whether or not the learner has developed the ability to apply the subject matter. Each learner should build a casebook in which to accumulate the evaluation materials. Completed evaluations should be reviewed by the leader, revised when necessary, and added to the casebook. Learners who do this, as scheduled, will expedite their work in

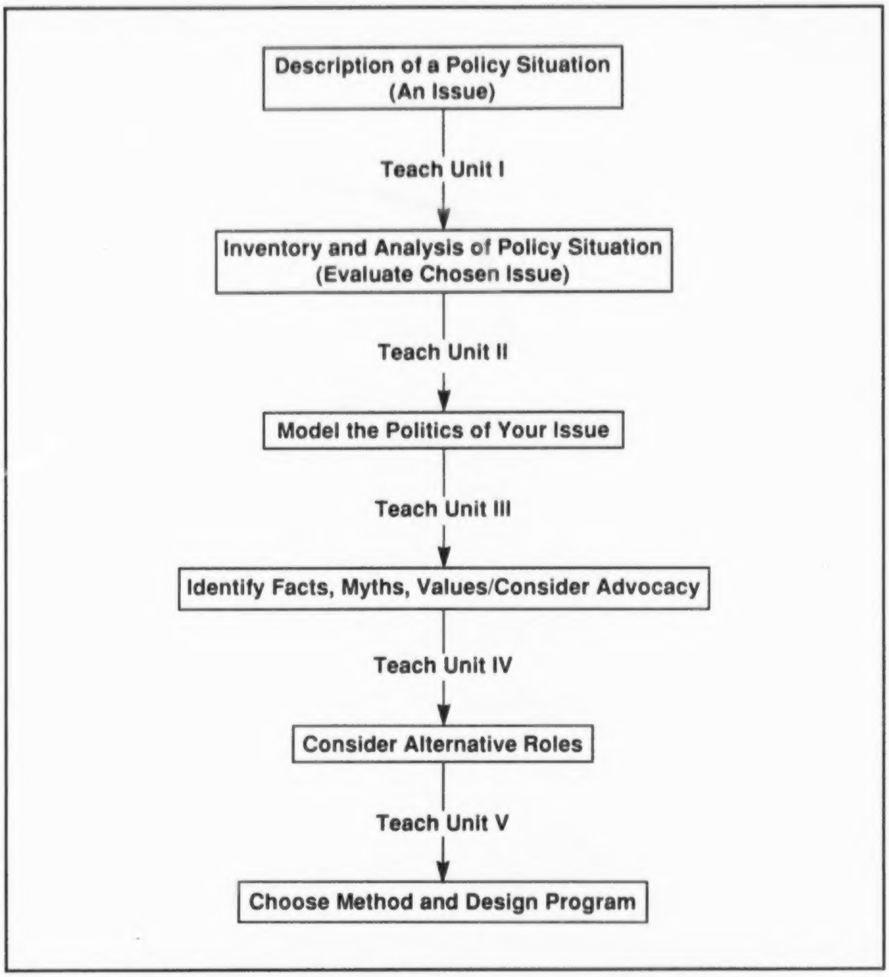
Description of a Policy Situation
(An Issue)
Teach Unit I
Inventory and Analysis of Policy Situation
(Evaluate Chosen Issue)
Teach Unit II
Model the Politics of Your Issue
Teach Unit III
Identify Facts, Myths, Values/Consider Advocacy
Teach Unit IV
Consider Alternative Roles
Teach Unit V
Choose Method and Design Program

Figure 1. Flow chart of the evaluation process for the learner

summarizing their thinking to complete the final evaluation.

At the beginning of your workshop, the learners may or may not have identified a public issue. That is one of the first items you should determine. At the end of each unit, the learners will review the issue they chose and be given an opportunity to change to a new issue, if their expanded knowledge indicates that their original issue is faulty.

For purposes of illustration, you may wish to select a topical issue and "walk it through" each unit of the Module.

## Others Who Can Help Teach Education for Public Decisions

There probably are people in your state, territory, or province who have expertise in public policy education, or in working with controversy. They may be useful counselors, teammates, or advisers to you as you study, team, and practice public policy education. Here are some specific suggestions:

1. Ask your public policy specialist(s) to team teach with you. If you are the public policy specialist, ask an Extension educator or training officer to teach with you.

2. If you know Extension agents or specialists who have successful experience in public policy education, you might ask them to substitute for one of the resource people in the videotapes.

3. Involve people who have had other Extension in-service public policy education. For example, you might ask for assistance from those who have studied Extension public policy education at the Western Extension Winter School at Tucson, Arizona, the Duluth Extension Summer School in Minnesota, the Regional Extension Summer School at Raleigh, N.C., or at Extension Public Policy Education seminars in Washington, D.C.

4. Consider asking your Extension Director to teach the subject matter of Siebert's paper on administration and public policy education, to give his or her own comments. [*Note:* this paper is included in the Learners' Packet.]

5. Exploit the complementarity with other modules. While public policy education, community development, and leadership development differ, they all tend, in some way, to deal with education for public decisions. Other modules in this series teach leadership development and how to work with groups; you can build on their teachings. [See **Module 3: Developing Leadership** and **Module 5: Working With Groups and Organizations.]**

6. Most states either have or are initiating an adult leadership development program. Public policy is an essential component of leadership development. These two program areas can complement each other. Leadership development opens doors to many opportunities to participate in public policy education. You have in this Module the very best materials available to teach public policy. So, you should be able to team up with those responsible for leadership development. Established leadership programs can be a rich source of help to you. The new Family Community Leadership programs ask their participants to teach others about public policy; you can help those learners distinguish between advocacy and education.

7. If you have small numbers of Extension agents and specialists in your state, consider sending them to existing in-service public policy education schools or cooperating in multistate efforts.

## Preworkshop Assignments for Leaders and Learners

### Leaders

Prior to teaching the contents of this Module, leaders should make advance preparations that include the following:

1. Preview the Leader's Teaching Plan and Teaching Materials.

2. Complete the Required Readings and Directive Questions, where indicated.

3. Prepare lectures, where indicated.

4. Plan for or gather necessary supplemental materials and resources: for example, "resource people," VCR, newsprint, among others.

5. Arrange for learners to receive the Sourcebook and Learners' Packet well in advance of the workshop. Also inform learners of required advance preparation on their part, and give them instructions for assignments and readings to be completed before attending. [See the "workshop assignments" for the learners that follows.]

6. If you plan to involve Extension administrators in the activity to accomplish Objective 5 in Unit I, be sure to send them a copy of Siebert's paper, which is in the Learners' Packet. If administrator(s) are not available to help accomplish Objective 5, select one of the following options to involve the participants:

- Send each a copy of the Siebert paper in advance, so the group will be prepared to discuss the issues it raises; or

- Send three or four of the participants a copy of Siebert's paper and ask them to develop four questions they will discuss as members of a panel considering "The Role of Extension Administrators in Public Policy Education"; or

- Send two participants a copy of Siebert's paper and ask them to prepare to "role-play" an Extension administrator during the workshop.

### Learners

Preworkshop readings and preparatory activities for Unit I are:

1. Prepare a brief (one-page to three-page) description of a current "hot" or emerging public issue in your county or state.

2. Complete the following essential readings:

- Sourcebook, Unit I.

- Barrows' "Public Policy Education," pp. 1-9 (in Instructional Aids)

- "Public Policy Education in Extension Home Economics" (in Instructional Aids)

- "How Influence Is Exercised in Public Policy Decisionmaking"—Fact Sheet (in Learners' Packet)

# Unit I. Introduction to Public Policy Education

## Leader's Teaching Plan

**Concept**: Definition of public policy education and how it relates to Extension education activities.

### Introduction

You are about to read a plan for introducing Extension educators to public policy education. Extension educators typically disseminate information about and encourage the adoption of new technology, and rarely expect controversy in those efforts. Nevertheless, controversy sometimes confronts us. At times, we identify issues in which the public is going to be involved. If controversy ensues in this process, it can create conditions that block or delay Extension education. In this unit, learners are introduced to a philosophy and methods that can facilitate Extension education in the face of controversy.

**Time Required to Complete Unit I**:
2 hours, with optional activities for an additional 1 hour and 20 minutes.

### Schedule of Activities for Unit I:

**OBJECTIVE 1: Initiate Module evaluation.**
**Time: 15 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 2: Describe the philosophical basis for public policy education, define basic terms, and begin to differentiate between public and private issues.**
**Time: 15 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 3: Gain awareness of the importance of public policy education in Extension education.**
**Time: 20 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 4: Learn how to identify who is affected by a public issue.**
**Time: 15 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 5: Gain understanding of how Extension administrators view involvement in public issues.**
**Time: 20 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 6: Begin to understand whom, when, and what to teach in public policy education.**
**Time: 25 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 7: Complete the Evaluation Exercise at the end of Unit I.**
**Time: 10 minutes**

### Optional Activities

**OBJECTIVE 8: Distinguish programs for clients from programs on public issues.**
**Time: 20 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 9: Perceive how public policy education relates to other Extension areas.**
**Time: 30 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 10: List at least four examples of public policy education in home economics and in agriculture and natural resources.**
**Time: 30 minutes**

## Leader's Teaching Materials

**OBJECTIVE 1: Initiate Module evaluation. (15 minutes)**

Introduce yourself, giving your background and expressing your interest in public policy education. Say why you think public policy education is important to each Extension educator. Then, ask each person to introduce himself or herself, and tell why he or she is interested in public policy education.

Describe your teaching style. Tell what resources you will use. If the participants did not receive the Sourcebook and Learners' Packet in advance of the workshop, give them these materials.

## Resources for Unit I

**Materials and Equipment Needed to Teach This Unit:**

VCR
Colored marking pens
Newsprint, blackboard, or both
Overhead projector
Sourcebook, Unit I

**Publications :**

Barrows, R. "Public Policy Education," pp. 1–9 (in Instructional Aids)
Siebert, Jerome. "Administrative Considerations Regarding Public Policy Education" (in Learners' Packet)
"How Influence is Exercised in Public Policy Decisionmaking" —Fact Sheet (in Learners' Packet)
"Public Policy Education in Extension Home Economics" (in Instructional Aids)

**Evaluation Forms (in Learners' Packet)**

"Evaluation Exercise to Begin Unit I."
"Evaluation": Unit I.

**Videotape and Transparency (in Instructional Aids):**

"Educating for Public Decisions," videotape (13 minutes)
"Thomas Jefferson Quotation" (Transparency 1)

Before starting Unit I, "hook" the participants into your topic by proceeding to the Evaluation Exercise for Unit I.

### Beginning Evaluation Exercise

Each learner is to select a current public issue or a problem that will probably require a public decision. The evaluation exercises throughout the Module will help you ascertain whether or not each learner is able to relate the new learning to actual situations in Extension. The issue they select now will be used by them for the evaluation exercise at the end of each unit. Therefore, it is essential that each learner complete each evaluation worksheet and accumulate them, because each exercise depends on what is done in the preceding exercises.

The objective of this exercise is to get learners to identify why controversy occurs in their Extension programs.

Form groups of twos and threes. Each person needs a pencil or pen and the worksheet "Evaluation Exercise to Begin Unit I." Explain to the learners that the issue each participant selects now will be a personal case study for the entire workshop—so it is important to write the answers to questions on this and subsequent evaluation sheets. Encourage them to discuss their answers with members of their small groups.

When all have completed writing, ask learners to share the public issue they have chosen, and the ways they would handle controversy. Summarize common themes in issues and approaches.

**OBJECTIVE 2: Describe the philosophical basis for public policy education, define basic terms, and begin to differentiate between public and private issues. (15 minutes)**

You may use the "mini-lecture" or adapt it to a discussion and explanation of the philosophical basis for public policy education, the definitions of the basic terms, and a discussion of the difference between public and private issues.

## Mini-Lecture: "Public Policy Education"

*Policy* defines the rules by which we operate. We have policies in the home: "Keep a $300 minimum balance in the checking account." "Thursday is cleaning night." "No loaded guns in the house." These are examples of policies.

Every business has its policies. In fact, it often seems true that the larger the business, the more policies it creates. For example, company policies may state: "No refunds on sale items." "Each employee will get 10 days leave with pay." "Friday is payday, so long as there is money in the till."

Does your state Extension service have operating policies? You can safely bet your oldest child that it does! Organizations must have rules to guide their operations. These rules are policies. There are no exceptions! Universities have policies: faculty handbooks are typically fat tomes of guidelines on promotions, hiring practices, tenure, leaves, among others. Governments have lots of rules. The Food Security Act of 1985 is 1/2-inch thick and has 1,801 sections distributed among 18 titles. The Tax Reform Act of 1986 is over 7,000 pages long.

What is *public policy?* Of the foregoing examples, which are private policies and which are public policies? Obviously, whether we clean our house on Thursday night or Monday morning is our private business, and no one else's. Whether we keep a minimum balance of +$300 or –$300 is a private matter between our household and our banker. Decisions about my company's leave policy are a private policy for that company.

Public policy in the U.S. differs from private policy in a number of ways: (1) it involves a public choice between alternative courses of action that will affect potentially large numbers of people; (2) it requires input from numerous individuals, groups, and entities concerned with the choice under consideration; and (3) it requires that an official governmental body complete a formalized procedure to make the choice (or decision) legitimate (e.g., the county commissioners enact an ordinance; the city council passes a city ordinance; the Supreme Court hands down a judicial decision). Let us examine a private versus a public example to see if this can all be made clearer.

Lee Iacocca, Chairman of the Chrysler Corporation, may ask the public what it wants from new cars, but the decision about what actually to supply is his. It is a private decision. If Mr. Iacocca says Chrysler is going to build a new car with all the doors on one side, it will be done. If he says that the company will finance those new cars at 2.9 percent, it will be done.

*continued*

Compare his position to that of the President of the U.S. For example, Mr. Reagan has enjoyed a relatively compliant Congress. Yet, it took him six years to bring about tax reform. Why? The decisionmaking process is different. Change could not happen until all of the interest groups were heard. They all had to be involved, because they all had something to gain or to lose from a change.

So, public policy differs from private policy in the mix of people involved in the policymaking process. Involvement takes time and energy (and, usually, money). The benefits to those involved are less predictable than in the private sector, and there usually is the opportunity to let someone else exert the effort.

The Food Security Act and tax reform are two examples of public policy. They are laws passed by the Congress. So it is not news that the Congress creates laws. In addition to laws, what are some other forms of public policy? Administrative rules or regulations to implement the laws; court decrees interpreting the laws and rules; and policies adopted by counties, cities, judicial courts, or townships, or other units of local government. So, public policy comes in many forms.

To define public policy education, it is easiest to begin with education. Webster said education is "the process of training and developing the knowledge, skill, mind, characters, etc., especially by formal schooling; teaching; training." Some educators prefer a definition of education that involves developing people's capacities to reason, interpret, analyze, and communicate. Regardless, we now know what policy is, and how private and public policy differ.

*Public policy education is increasing people's understanding of public political policymaking processes, and increasing their capacity to participate effectively in determining what public policy should be.* Is this some radical new concept that educators dreamed up? No! Public policy education has evolved in recent decades, but the concept is attributed to the "founding fathers" of this nation.

[Use Transparency 1 here.]

[*Note*: If the audience includes learners from countries other than the U.S., inquire if the philosophy of Jefferson is practiced in their country; whether the concept of public policy education could find support in their culture; or how the public is involved in governmental policymaking decisions.]

**OBJECTIVE 3: Gain awareness of the importance of public policy education in Extension education. (20 minutes).**

Show the videotape, "Educating for Public Decisions." Then ask these questions:

1. What is your understanding of public policy education, now that you have viewed the videotape?

2. Did viewing the videotape clarify for you what public policy education is? What is it?

**OBJECTIVE 4: Learn how to identify who is affected by a public policy issue. (15 minutes).**

### Political Inventory Exercise (PIE): Taking Inventory of Those Likely to Be Involved

Learners should have read the Fact Sheet —"How Influence Is Exercised." Use the following instructions for the "PIE" Exercise:

1. Pick a public issue that is likely to be familiar to your learners.

2. Take a couple of minutes to discuss the nature of the issue. On a large chalkboard, write the issue in the far left corner: that is, "What is."

3. Discuss how this issue might be resolved. For example: Will it be new law? Or, is it likely to be settled by the court? By the county commission?

Write this in the opposite far right corner to leave the maximum blank space. This is "Where we are headed."

4. Draw a list of "who's" from the learners through persistent questioning: Who will shape the outcome? Who are they? Interest groups? Which ones? Organizations? Name them. Agencies? Which ones?

Keep going until the board is full. You now have an inventory of those likely to be involved in the issue. And, simultaneously, an inventory of the potential audience. Your inventory will look a bit like this:

| What is | Who | Where we are headed |
|---|---|---|
| Tax structure | Governor<br>Businesses<br>Wage earners | New tax code |

5. Ask: "If you had made this outline alone, would you have created this same list? What is the usefulness of this list? Who would use it? Politicians? Yes. Public policy educators? You bet! How? That is what we are going to learn. We will come back to this simple little lesson as we study policymaking and again in public policy education."

6. Ask: "What is the best way to assemble such an inventory? How would *you* use it?" (This question will be answered more fully in later units.)

**OBJECTIVE 5: Gain understanding of how Extension administrators view involvement in issues. (20 minutes)**

### Extension Administrators and Public Policy

Give a copy of Siebert's paper, "Administrative Considerations Regarding Public Policy Education," to at least two Extension administrators, and ask them to review it for the group. Center the discussion around the questions that follow.

1. What are the main concerns that face administrators regarding Extension public policy education?

2. Why do Extension administrators need to acknowledge public policy education as a legitimate Extension activity?

3. What preparatory steps can assist the Extension administrator in carrying out appropriate public policy education?

4. What is the role of Extension administrators in public policy education?

5. What is the role of the general public in public policy education?

6. From the Extension administrator's standpoint, what are some possible desirable outcomes of well-planned public policy education?

(Allow a few minutes for questions by the learners.)

**(Alternative Format)**

If no Extension administrator is present, and you did not preassign participants to discuss Siebert's paper, use your answers to the foregoing questions 1, 2, 3, and 5 to give a five-minute lecture on Siebert's paper to the participants.

After discussing questions 1, 2, 3, and 5 (do not discuss questions 4 and 6, or you will be doing the learners' task for them), separate the learners into small groups to discuss the following questions:

1. How important to the Extension educator is administrator support? Is it essential, or just preferable?

2. How can you get it?

3. How can you lose it?

4. What are the risks of administrative involvement in public policy education?

5. What are the risks of administrative noninvolvement?

Ask for group reports. Provide summary comments.

**OBJECTIVE 6: Begin to understand whom, when, and what to teach. (30 minutes)**

### Whom, What, and When: Instructions for Brainstorming Session

Using Barrows' "Public Policy Education" paper, pages 4–9, as background reading on this topic, work with the learners, as a group, to complete the following brainstorming activity:

Select a public issue that will serve as a vehicle for discussion. [For example, state and local taxes are an issue of general concern.]

Describe the policy issue to the whole group. Then, have participants brainstorm answers to these three questions, while you write their contributions on easel paper:

1. Whom should we plan to teach?

2. What are we going to teach?

3. When are we going to teach? [Introduce the concept of "teachable moment," discussed in the Sourcebook.]

**OBJECTIVE 7: Complete the Evaluation Exercise at the end of Unit I. (10 minutes)**

Remind learners to save this completed form and other evaluations.

## Concluding Remarks

Conclude by summarizing what was learned today, and what the learners might do with this new information (e.g., take it back to their communities to work on public policy education; use it as a first step in further study of **Education for Public Decisions;** etc.)

## Optional Activities

The following activities are recommended, if extra time is available, or if the relationship between public policy education and more traditional Extension efforts is still unclear to the learners.

**OBJECTIVE 8: Distinguish programs for clients from programs on public issues. (20 minutes)**

**OBJECTIVE 9: Perceive how public policy education relates to other Extension areas. (30 minutes)**

## Public Policy Education and Other Extension Program Areas

After reading Unit I of the Sourcebook, answer the following questions to meet the situation in your state or region, and use the answers you develop as the basis for a 30-minute lecture or discussion.

**Directive Questions** (for lecture or discussion):

1. In general, how does public policy education differ from other Extension programs?

2. Under what circumstances is public policy education particularly useful?

3. How is public policy education related to the following Extension program areas?
   a. Community development?
   b. Leadership development?
   c. Agriculture and natural resources?
   d. Home economics?

**OBJECTIVE 10:**

**Be able to list at least four examples of public policy education in home economics and in agriculture and natural resources. (30 minutes)**

## Mini-Lecture: "Client versus Public Issue Programs"

Although most Extension education is for dissemination of information and for facilitating the adoption of new technology (these are the "bread-and-butter" functions of Extension, and they have done a huge amount of good in the United States), from time to time, someone or some group perceives an Extension program as doing a great harm. What happens then?

The "clients" for whom the program was designed react defensively when challenged. They expect their Extension agents and specialists to take the same position they do. If the agents or specialists conform to this expectation, they lose their status as educators. If they do not conform, they lose support from the clients. Does this mean that the Extension educator, in such a situation, is "damned if (s)he does and damned if (s)he doesn't?" Not necessarily. Alternatives are available to the Extension educator. These alternatives mean using the methods of public policy educators, methods that will let the Extension educator deal with controversy without being controversial.

Client-oriented programs are typically "hand-in-glove" working relationships. The client groups determine the focus of the Extension program and, in turn, support Extension, especially any Extension programs or information that publicize their interests or support their viewpoint. There are many advantages to working closely with the interest groups in one's county or state, but these advantages often come at some cost. One cost can be charges of "advocacy" made on the basis of some "perceived bias." If the educator succumbs to pressure and adopts the clients' point of view, he or she will be perceived by others as a *biased* participant in the public policy process, rather than as an *objective* educator. Whether this perception is or is not based on fact, it carries with it both benefits and costs. The costs often are high when the subject is a public issue.

*continued*

Compare this situation to a program that is designed to deal with an issue, that is, the issue-oriented program. In this approach, the educator selects the topic. The educator determines who is likely to be affected by resolution of the issue, and makes sure that these interests participate in the program. In addition, the educational agenda is open to all who want to assert their role in the policymaking process. In issue-oriented programs, the educator is freed from defending any one interest group.

There are specific methods to be learned that help the Extension educator succeed with this approach. The methods have been tested, and they can be learned by Extension agents and specialists alike. The learner will learn some of these methods in Unit V of this Module.

**Public Policy Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources and in Home Economics (in Instructional Aids).**

Review the examples of public policy issues on page 2 of the ECOP publication, ''Public Policy Education in Extension Home Economics'' (in Instructional Aids).

Assign the learners to small groups and charge them with listing five policy issues that could be the topic of public policy education in agriculture and natural resources, and for youths.

Ask each group to report back to the larger group. Discuss what they learned.

# Unit II. Models of Public Policymaking: How Public Policy Is Made in America

## Leader's Teaching Plan

**Concept**: What are public policymaking models, and how are they used?

### Introduction

Ask most people who makes the laws, and the response will be that "they" do it. Most of us do not know who makes policy. And we do not care, until we want a policy changed. Then, if we care enough to get involved, we are ready to learn how public policy is made. A "teachable moment" has arrived.

But, how does one go about teaching something so complex as the making of public policy? Social scientists have developed "models" of real-world political behavior that help in understanding public policymaking. In these models, they have cut away some of the complexity, leaving a simplified explanation of how public policy is really made in America.

In Unit II, learners are introduced to four models of public policymaking. These models provide a variety of tools, each of which describes the policymaking process in a different way. Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to use at least one of the models to describe the public policymaking process, and will be aware of the existence of other models, and the differences between them. In addition, the learner will be able to anticipate who some significant "actors" in the public policymaking process will be.

**Time Required to Complete Unit II**: 4 hours

**Prerequisite Reading for Learners:**

Unit II of Sourcebook

"Kings and Kingmakers"—Fact Sheet

"Two Models of Public Decisionmaking"—Fact Sheet

"The Stages of Decisionmaking"—Fact Sheet

"Triangles and Clusters"—Fact Sheet

"Comparing Policymaking Models"—Fact Sheet

### Schedule of Activities for Unit II

**OBJECTIVE 1: Gain first-hand experience "being" a politician; think about what it is like to "practice" politics.**
**Time: 10 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 2: Become aware of the existence of different models.**
**Time: 40 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 3: Use two models to describe how public policy is made.**
**Time: 30 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 4: Be able to compare and contrast models of public policymaking.**
**Time: 40 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 5: Demonstrate an understanding of the membership in the power cluster.**
**Time: 20 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 6: Consider how citizen influence might occur in the learner's community.**
**Time: 55 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 7: Stage a debate to compare three models of public policymaking.**
**Time: 30 minutes**

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**OBJECTIVE 8: Complete the Evaluation Exercise at the end of Unit II (in Learner's Packet)**
**Time: 15 minutes**

## Resources for Unit II

**Materials and Equipment Needed to Teach This Unit:**

VCR
Blackboard or newsprint, or both
Chalk or colored marking pens
A prize for the Issue Mapping Design Contest
Overhead projector
Sourcebook, Unit II

**Publications (in Learners' Packet):**

"Kings and Kingmakers—An Elite Model of Public Policymaking"—Fact Sheet
"Two Models of Public Decisionmaking: Lindblom's 'Muddling Through' versus the Rational Comprehensive Model"—Fact Sheet
"The Stages of Decisionmaking Model"—Fact Sheet
"'Triangles and Clusters' Models of Policymaking"—Fact Sheet
"Comparing Policymaking Models"—Fact Sheet

**Evaluation Form (in Learners' Packet)**

"Evaluation: Unit II"

**Videotapes and Transparencies (in Instructional Aids)**

Flinchbaugh, B. L., "Kings and Kingmakers," videotape (32 minutes)
"Kings and Kingmakers" (Transparency 2)
"Power Cluster Model" (Transparency 3)
"Stages of Decisionmaking" (Transparency 4)

**Relevant Resources in Selected Readings**

Flinchbaugh, Barry L. "Who Makes Public Decisions? Who Sets Policy?" Prepared for Module 6.
Hahn, A. "Stages in the Decisionmaking Process." Prepared for Module 6.

## Leader's Teaching Materials

**OBJECTIVE 1: Gain first-hand experience "being" a politician; think about what it is like to "practice" politics.**
**Time: 10 minutes.**

The following activity, "working a crowd" of people, is a good icebreaker. It also provides an opportunity to discuss how the participants feel about politics, politicians, and their own role in controversial public issues.

## "Practice Politics" Exercise

"Let's practice one aspect of politics. To be successful as a politician, it is important to get to know your constituents. Let me demonstrate." (Get a "volunteer" from the group to help you. Have someone time you.)

"We are going to practice 'working the crowd.' When a politician enters a group, he or she tries to have some meaningful contact with as many people as possible. Politicians move quickly! While someone times me, I will demonstrate."

"Hello, ____________. It is a pleasure to see you. How's your mother?" (Continue like this for a few moments.)

"Now, you will get a chance to 'practice politics.' You each have one minute to see how many 'meaningful' contacts you can accomplish. Tally them for yourself. I will time you. Go!"

Give the participants one minute; then get them reseated so they can count the number of contacts they made. You might give a prize or some other recognition to the one who has the highest count.

**OBJECTIVE 2: Become aware of the existence of different models of public policymaking. (40 minutes).**

## Mini-Lecture: "Models of Public Policymaking"

A well-known political economist, Charles Lindblom, once said, "Public policy isn't made once and for all; it is made and remade endlessly." Meaning no offense to Mr. Lindblom, some of us may think his remark quite unremarkable. On the other hand, some of us are bewildered by political behavior. What exactly does Lindblom mean? If you fit into one of these categories, you are among good company.

For years, public policy educators and social scientists have worked hard to develop simple ways to describe how the "people's public business" gets done. Today, we will be learning about some of the means these individuals have developed to provide clear and simple descriptions of how public policy is made. We will be learning about simplifying devices called public policy models. Models can be useful to all of us. Why? Because whether you are already comfortable with your understanding of public policy or whether you get squeamish at the sound of the words, "political behavior," and all they suggest, power, influence (or the lack of power and influence) are all concerns that, to one degree or another, affect our lives. Models can focus our public policy questions on what is and what is not important in the process of finding solutions to public dilemmas. Models can suggest explanations for why one policy is adopted successfully and another fails.

Today, we will examine several different public policy models that have been developed to describe public policymaking. Why should we cover several models? Because different models focus on different aspects of the political process. Some focus on power: who has it and who does not. Some models focus on influence, and how public business actually gets done. Others focus on public institutions and how they work. Each model has its usefulness and its limitations. None provide a perfect recipe for political action. Let us turn now to the videotape, "Kings and Kingmakers," and begin our inquiry into one model described by Flinchbaugh.

Show the videotape, "Kings and Kingmakers," prepared for this Module.

**OBJECTIVE 3: Use two models to describe how public policy is made. (30 minutes)**

After showing the videotape, "Kings and Kingmakers," review the paper, "Who Makes Public Decisions? Who Sets Policy?" also by Flinchbaugh (in Selected Readings). Use the following Directive Questions for class discussion.

**Directive Questions:**

1. Does the "Kings and Kingmakers" model describe your community? Why? Why not?

2. Is your county as stratified as the one that Flinchbaugh describes? How so? How does it differ?

3. What do you think about the "Clusters" model? Does it seem realistic to you? What do you think about Flinchbaugh's interpretation of this model, with the influence triangle contained within each cluster?

4. What do you think of public policymaking models so far? Do you think they would help you to describe the policymaking process in your community? Why? Why not?

**OBJECTIVE 4: Be able to compare and contrast models of public policymaking. (40 minutes)**

### Lecture or Discussion of Four Different Models of Public Policymaking

The following mini-lecture draws on Unit II of the Sourcebook. Develop your own lecture to describe the models covered in Unit II, or use the information that follows. As you cover the material, use Transparencies 2, 3, and 4 to help you summarize the distinguishing features of the models.

### Mini-Lecture: "Four Models of Public Policymaking"

You should now recognize that there are several different types of models. In addition to the videotape introductions to Flinchbaugh's "Kings and Kingmakers" model and Ogden's "Clusters" model, you should have read Unit II of the Sourcebook, which provides a survey of all the different models used in this unit. Let us take a minute to review what we have covered so far.

In the "Kings and Kingmakers" model, Flinchbaugh describes a hierarchy of persons who have the power to make and influence public policy. [Show Transparency 2.] The hierarchy indicates that policymaking is accomplished by those at the top of the hierarchy, while persons at the bottom of the hierarchy remain uninvolved. This model is one example of what political scientists call an "elite" model. It rests on the belief that decisionmaking gets accomplished by an "elite" segment of society.

In the "Clusters" model, on the other hand, Ogden suggests that policymaking occurs when different interested groups work to affect the decisionmaking process that touches their area of interest. [Show Transparency 3.] Further, there are many significant persons who affect policymaking in differing ways, depending on the specific type of policy or decision being made. This type of model is also known as a "group" model, for it rests on the idea that many groups affect the formulation, creation, and implementation of public policy.

*continued*

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Infanger describes two other models of policymaking: Incrementalism and Stages. How do these differ from the two previously described? In his Incremental model,Lindblom focuses on how public decisionmaking actually occurs in the real world, and describes a policymaking system that involves small, incremental changes that build on the policies of the past. (This model is in direct contrast to another model, the rational-comprehensive, described briefly in the Fact Sheet, "Two Models of Public Decisionmaking.") Lindblom describes this process through the analogy of a tree, in which incremental policy changes are analogous to growing branches that gradually develop as offshoots of the preexisting policy "trunk."

In our final model, the "Stages of Decisionmaking," Hahn describes the steps or sequential events that occur when public policy is made. [Show Transparency 4.] This type of model can be referred to as a "social process model," for its concern is not with who has the power or how decisions get made, but rather the sequential process by which public policy is made.

Once you have reviewed these essential features, begin to differentiate between the different models through discussion of the following Directive Questions.

**Directive Questions:**

1. Who (or which "actors" in the political system) will determine the policy outcome using:

- The Kings and Kingmakers model? (An elite model)
- The Clusters model? (A group model)
- The Lindblom model? (An incremental model)
- The Stages of Decisionmaking model? (A social process model)

2. Are all these models consistent with Jeffersonian democracy? Why? Why not?

3. Are there any similarities among the models? If so, what are they? For example, is the basic assumption in all of the models that policymaking is a continuous, cyclical activity?

4. How do the models differ? (As you lead the discussion, look for the distinctions noted.)

- In their focus?

"Kings" is focused on "who" makes public decisions and "who" sets policy; the concern is with "who" has the power. Lindblom's "Branch" or Incremental model is focused on "how" public decisions are made; i.e., are they made in a rational and comprehensive manner, or are they made piecemeal or incrementally? Concern in the Clusters model is also the "who" in public decisionmaking, but the focus is on many, multiple groups rather than a hierarchy of elites, as in the "Kings and Kingmakers" model. The "Stages of Desionmaking" model is focused on the "how" process, or sequential steps of the policymaking process.

- In their usefulness?

Depending on your own focus when examining the policymaking process (for example, the "who" or the "how"; the setting of state, local, or federal government), one particular model is likely to be the most descriptive of policymaking reality. Whichever one "fits" best is therefore most useful for your particular situation.

- In the policy problems that they reveal?

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The implication in some models is that our governmental (and policymaking) process is less than democratic (Kings); in others, that policymaking is not necessarily a *rational* process; and some models may frustrate observers, for they reveal the many different points that policy decisions (regarding one issue area, for example) *must* be made. The point is, sometimes ''simple'' models reveal hidden, unexpected policy problems. For example, problems in the ''democratic process,'' i.e., ''Kings'' hold the power rather than ''the people''; problems of ''muddling through'' versus rational decisionmaking; problems of complexity due to the many different points within government where decisions are made.

•In their limitations?

For example, ''Kings'' offers little detail about the actual process of decisionmaking, whereas the ''Stages'' model is heavy on process. The Incremental model does not show that power may be distributed unevenly or inequitably throughout the political decisionmaking structure.

**OBJECTIVE 5: To demonstrate an understanding of the membership of a power cluster. (20 minutes)**

## Issue-Mapping Design Contest

Ask the learners to complete their own power cluster ''wheel,'' filling in the membership of the cluster for their issue. A copy of the ''wheel'' is in the Learners' Packet. Display the transparency of this model (Transparency 3) to help the learners, if necessary.

When they have completed the ''wheel,'' ask each learner to describe the groups he or she identified.

**OBJECTIVE 6: Consider how citizen influence might occur in the learner's community. (55 minutes)**

This activity expands on the PIE Exercise completed in Unit I. Completion of this exercise suggests goals, setting, citizen roles, and possible tactics.

Form teams of five or six people. Using one of the team member's issues, have the team walk through the steps of the ''Stages'' model developed by Alan Hahn. Ask each team to ''map'' its walk through the ''Stages'' on newsprint.

The task of this exercise is for each team to describe how its issue could move through all of Hahn's stages and involve the people of the team's community.

Give participants 20 minutes to work as teams. Then, ask each team to describe its ''issue map'' to the entire group.

**OBJECTIVE 7: Stage a debate to compare three models of policymaking, their similarities and differences. (30 minutes)**

Make sure that the learners have read Unit II of the Sourcebook and the two Fact Sheets, ''Kings and Kingmakers: An Elite Model of Public Policymaking'' and ''Two Models of Public Decisionmaking: Lindblom's 'Muddling Through' versus the Rational Comprehensive Model.''

Tell the learners to think about what each model suggests in relation to the other models. Divide the learners into three equal groups or teams. Assign one team to be the ''Kings'' model, one to be the ''Rational-Comprehensive'' model, and one to be the ''Incremental'' model. Each team is to select one person to be its ''debator.'' As teams, they will have five minutes to prepare arguments for their debator to use in arguing the merits of their model for describing the policymaking process. Then, stage a debate among the three teams' debators. Give each person five minutes to argue the case for his or her model. Give each person two minutes for rebuttal.

Help the group, as a whole, evaluate the arguments that were presented. Try to address the following questions:

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1. Which arguments for which model were most persuasive? Why?

2. Did you feel that one particular model was the winner in our debate? Would any one model be the winner, in reality?

3. Does each model have something to offer that is of value and should not be overlooked?

4. In real life, would you argue that one model is "better" than the other?

The answer here should be NO. Since all models are simplifications of reality, they leave out some aspects of the real world of policymaking. Therefore, no single model can possibly describe reality completely. The danger of "advocating" one model over another is that no single model is sufficient in and of itself.

5. Which model would you use to teach others? Why?

**OBJECTIVE 8: Complete the Evaluation Exercise at the end of Unit II. (15 minutes)**

Refer participants to the Evaluation Exercise for Unit II in the Learners' Packet. Ask them to complete the exercise, building on the situation they identified in Unit I; remind them to keep their responses.

## Concluding Remarks

When the evaluation has been concluded, summarize the results of your inquiry so far. Remember that the goals for this unit were to:

- Become aware of the existence of different public policymaking models;
- Be able to use one model to describe how public policy is made; and
- Be able to compare and contrast models of public policymaking.

# Unit III. Facts, Myths, Values, Ethics, and Advocacy

## Leader's Teaching Plan

**Concept:** How can we educate about value-laden issues without taking on an advocacy role? What difference does it make?

### Introduction

Most Extension educators disseminate information that affects transfer of technology. The educational methods we use for these purposes are effective. But, they have to be modified when the topic is public policy. Sometimes, we do not anticipate controversy; sometimes, we do not know what to do about it. Here, we begin to explore the unique aspects of controversy that go along with public issues. In Unit III, an understanding of the ways that values and ethics influence public policy is created. Learners will see the valuable function served by providing research-based information about alternative solutions. They also will begin to understand why such information may be ignored or even rejected. Facts, myths, ethics, and values all play strong roles in public policymaking.

The basic philosophies of many experienced Extension educators, especially those who view their role as a defender of some group or value, are challenged in Unit III. Expect some frustration to surface! By the end of this unit, many learners will have internalized the reasons why public policy education methods must be different. Most will accept this difference when they work their way through the models in subsequent units. The teaching methods recommended make it easier for leaders to "manage" their frustration while the learning process proceeds.

Information in Unit III will help learners distinguish public policy education from advocacy. They gain practice in identifying facts, myths, and values, and they understand how ethics affects the choice of policies. Exercises are included to facilitate the learning process and to provide some practical tips for dealing with controversy. The readings demonstrate how values limit what we can teach about public policy.

**Time Required for Unit III:** 3 hours, with optional activities for up to 2 additional hours.

**Prerequisite Readings for Learners**

Sourcebook, Unit III

"Setting Group Goals"—Fact Sheet (in Learners' Packet)

Barrow's "Public Policy Education," pp. 10-12 (in Instructional Aids)

### Schedule of Activities for Unit III

**OBJECTIVE 1: Understand differences among facts, myths, and values.**
**Time: 60 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 2: Introduce the learner to the role of ethics in politics.**
**Time: 45 minutes total (lecture, 30 minutes; discussion, 15 minutes)**

**OBJECTIVE 3: Be able to explain why public policy education is inconsistent with advocacy.**
**Time: 30 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 4: Be introduced to methods for setting goals to minimize conflict when providing public policy education.**
**Time: 25 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 5: Complete the Evaluation Exercise at the end of Unit III.**
**Time: 15 minutes**

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## Resources for Unit III

**Materials and Equipment Needed to Teach This Unit**

VCR
Ruler
Blackboard or newsprint; or both
Chalk or colored marking pens
Overhead projector
Sourcebook, Unit III

**Publications (in Learners' Packet):**

Flinchbaugh, B. L., "Facts, Myths, Values, and Public Policy"—Fact Sheet
Cordes, Sam. "Pitfalls in Analyzing Public Problems"—Fact Sheet

**Publications (in Instructional Aids):**

Sharpe, Dave. "Setting Group Goals"—*Montguide*
Barrows, Richard. "Public Policy Education," pp. 10-12

**Evaluation Form** (in Learners' Packet)

"Evaluation: Unit III"

**Videotapes and Transparencies** (in Instructional Aids)

"Two Worms: The Importance of Facts, Myths, and Values in Public Policy," by B. L. Flinchbaugh—videotape (30 minutes)
Two Worms Poster
Hildreth and Johnson's "Framework of a Public Policy" and "Means/Ends Framework for Understanding the Public Policy Process" (Transparencies 5 and 6, respectively)

**Relevant Resources in Selected Readings**

Cordes, Sam M. "Pitfalls in Analyzing Public Problems." Prepared for this Module.
Hildreth, R. J., and G. Johnson. "Understanding Values and Ethics in Public Policy Education." Prepared for this Module.

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### Optional Activities (additional time of 10 minutes to 1 hour, 50 minutes)

**OBJECTIVE 6: Give the learner additional practice in recognizing the differences among facts, myths, and values.**
**Time: 10 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 7: Discuss the contributions that facts, myths, values, and ethics make to public policy.**
**Time: 30 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 8: Apply information on ethics and politics to several examples.**
**Time: 15–30 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 9: Examine a case study of advocacy in Extension and analyze its implications.**
**Time: 20 minutes**

## Leader's Teaching Materials

In the next few sessions we will explore why public policy education is unique. This exploration requires that we describe what must be changed so that Extension education can proceed in the face of controversy. We begin with an exploration of facts, myths, and values. It is not always easy to tell them apart. To get us thinking about what facts, myths, and values really have to do with public policy, let us begin with a "pretest" or "examination." Then, we will watch a videotape featuring Flinchbaugh to settle any arguments about what is a fact; what is a myth; and what is a value. We will follow that with a "posttest" to see what you have learned.

**OBJECTIVE 1: Understand differences between facts, myths, and values. (60 minutes)**

### Instructions for Videotape, Discussion, and Public Policy Quiz

Forty-five minutes are needed for the videotape, "Two Worms: The Importance of Facts, Myths, and Values in Public Policy," and discussion; 15 minutes are needed for the Public Policy quiz.

You may choose from two optional formats:

1. Show the videotape up to the point at which the two worms are introduced. At that point, stop the videotape and conduct the same exercise with the group as Flinchbaugh does in the videotape. (This option is recommended.)

2. Or, simply present the information in Flinchbaugh's videotape and his paper (in Selected Readings)

Show the videotape and conduct the "Two Worms" demonstration and discussion, using the "worms" poster, a ruler, and the Directive Questions that follow.

**Directive Questions:**

1. We have a public issue on our hands. It is, "which one of these worms is the longer?" (Vote by a show of hands.)

2. Why? (Use your measuring stick to find out and discuss how this "universal standard" helps us to resolve the dispute.)

3. Now we have another issue to settle regarding the worms. Which one is the prettier? How are we going to settle this

issue? Do we have any universally accepted "measure" for determining "prettiness?" Let us vote.

4. If unanimity is lacking, ask the voters who were in the minority what they would do if you passed a law declaring "X" worm the prettier? (Protest; vote out the rascals that were in power when the unfavorable vote was made; or other?)

5. Discuss how values are involved when we have no universally accepted standard to help us resolve debatable public issues.

**The Public Policy Quiz** (in Learners' Packet):

Administer the first 15 statements in the Public Policy Quiz. [*Note*: the key for the Quiz is at the end of this unit.] Give the following guidelines to the participants before they begin:

1. To help discern which statements are facts, ask yourself, for which do we have a "measuring stick?" Flinchbaugh used the concrete example of the one-foot ruler. If a measuring stick exists, it suggests that the statement is a fact or a myth. If we have no measuring stick, it suggests that statement is a value judgment.

2. Another way to separate facts from myths is to ask yourself whether or not the statement is verifiable. Would other analysis, using the same measure of verification, come up with the same result?

Let each individual "check" his or her answers as you review each statement.

Ask participants if they had trouble distinguishing facts, myths, and values. If they did, administer the second half of the Public Policy Quiz. When finished, again review the answers with the learners.

**OBJECTIVE 2: Introduce the learner to the role of ethics in politics. (45 minutes)**

## Understanding Values and Ethics in Public Policy Education

We are going to begin a serious consideration of values and ethics. We have been studying how public policy is made in relation to facts, myths, and values. Now we will study ethics and politics. Is it logical to relate ethics and politics? (Wait for audience comments.)

## Lecture and Discussion on Ethics and Public Policy

Review the questions (and possible answers) to the Directive Questions. This will furnish the essential information for this lecture. You may also choose to use the overhead transparencies of Hildreth and Johnson's figures that are in the Instructional Aids. The discussion will be most productive if the learners have read Unit III of the Sourcebook in advance.

**Directive Questions:**

[*Note*: The key points are in brackets following each question.]

1. What often causes controversy over public policy issues? [Conflict over values.]

2. What is ethics? How does ethics differ from value information? How can one tell the difference between these two terms? ["Ethics deals with the correctness of decisions about what ought to be done . . . while value information deals with goodness and badness. Value information distinguishes between goodness and badness while ethics deals with the prescription of rightness and wrongness."]

3. According to Hildreth and Johnson, how do you define:

- Value-free positive information? [Factual information usually developed using scientific methods.]
- Value knowledge or normative information? [Deals with the goodness and badness of what is, what will be, or

what could be; is humanistic and subjective.]

4. Which of these two terms is analogous to facts? To values? [Value-free positive information = facts; value knowledge = values.]

5. How can ethics be at odds with values? Give some examples. [See Sourcebook examples, Unit III.]

6. What are the implications of facts, myths, values, and ethics for public policy education? [See Sourcebook discussion of this same topic.]

**The Professor and the Pig Exercise** (15 minutes):

Tell or hand out the story of the professor and the pig (from House, 1983, pp. 32-33).

Read each of the following statements out loud and ask the learners to identify which are facts, myths, values, and ethics. They may write their answers on a piece of scratch paper. Or, you may write each statement on the blackboard and ask for individual verbal responses.

1. The pig was on the freeway. (Fact)

2. The pig could cause a serious accident. (Fact)

3. The pig was at the zoo. (Myth)

4. Pigs make poor social company. (Value judgment)

5. Even though hauling a skinned-up pig in a car would get it dirty, it was the right thing to do. (Ethic)

6. Policemen don't like pigs. (Myth)

7. Policemen are suspicious of professors. (Value judgment)

Then take a few minutes to discuss the learners' answers.

House's (1983, p. 33) interpretation of "The Professor and the Pig":

> Even though there seems to have been agreement on the problem, and the professor and the policeman had the same information, their

## The Professor and the Pig

The scene was a southern California freeway. The professor was driving down the freeway in his car and hit a pig. The pig rolled off the freeway into the right-of-way. The professor stopped his car and went back to see what became of the pig. The pig was scraped up a bit, but staggered to its feet. About that time a patrolman stopped to see what was going on. The professor explained what had happened and, since the pig was apparently mobile, they discussed the possibility that the pig might wander out onto the freeway again and cause a second accident. Therefore, they decided that they would load the pig into the professor's car and the professor would take the pig to a nearby zoo.

The next day, the same highway patrolman was driving down the freeway and saw a familiar car; but this time something was different. In the passenger's seat, sitting up, looking out the window like it had good sense, was a pig. The patrolman put the light on and pulled the car over. "Say," he said, "Aren't you the professor who hit the pig yesterday?" "Yes, sir, I am," the professor answered. "Isn't that the pig here in the car? I thought you were to take him to the zoo." "Yes, sir, I did take him to the zoo." "So what's he doing here?" "Well, we had such a good time that today we're going to Disneyland."

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values led to different preferred solutions to the problem. While this story is facetious, it illustrates a very serious problem confronting the public policy educator. The problem of differing values can prevent people from agreeing on a solution within any given community.

**OBJECTIVE 3: Be able to explain why public policy education is inconsistent with advocacy. (30 minutes)**

After reading Unit III of the Sourcebook and Barrows' ''Public Policy Education,'' pp. 10–12, summarize the key points made in these readings regarding public policy advocacy. Then, use the Directive Questions to lead a class discussion on the subject.

## Mini-Lecture: ''What Do Public Policy Educators Advocate?''

How can people see us as objective, disciplined educators if we tell them what they should think? They won't. We will be perceived as advocates who believe we are better judges of what should be than they are. This just does not work! Especially when we are working with public controversy, we cannot let ourselves be advocates for a group or cause. We might be the only possible objective force on this issue in the community or the state. At a 1986 workshop, Myron Johnsrud, USDA Administrator, put the point this way: "Your credibility as an educator is important to your university; don't jeopardize it."

**Directive Questions:**

1. What can Extension educators advocate and still be consistent with House's and Barrows' recommendations? (See Unit III, Sourcebook.)

2. What are some examples, from your own experience or observation, of advocacy by Extension educators?

3. Would nonadvocacy limit your effectiveness?

4. How could nonadvocacy contribute to credibility? What are the sources of our credibility?

5. Can you think of cases in which advocacy contributed to social well-being? Where advocacy destroyed credibility?

6. What is the difference between advocacy and politics? Should Extension agents be advocates? Politicians? Should Extension specialists? How about Extension administrators? How about Extension agents who also have administrative responsibilities?

**OBJECTIVE 4: Be introduced to methods for setting goals to minimize conflict when providing public policy education. (25 minutes)**

Prior to presenting this objective, be sure to have read the ''Setting Group Goals'' Fact Sheet by Sharpe (in Learners' Packet). Then answer the Directive Questions. Use your answers as the basis for a lecture and discussion.

## Mini-Lecture:
## "Methods for Setting Goals With Minimum Conflict"

One of the most difficult tasks in public policymaking is setting goals. No doubt one reason goal setting is difficult is because values and myths frequently "muddy" discussions and make clear, directed problem solving hard to accomplish. The method presented here will make that task much easier. "Setting Group Goals," by Dave Sharpe, gives a step-by-step process that Extension agents and specialists can use with most groups. The method has the Extension agent or specialist in the *facilitator* role. He or she helps the group compose a group list of problems, goals, and so forth. The reason that this method is recommended is that it works quickly and, at the same time, brings out the group's preferences. It is hard for any individual to dominate this process, and there is almost no opportunity for rancor.

**Directive Questions:**

1. How does the "Setting Group Goals" method prevent domination by individuals?

2. What are the strengths of this method?

3. With what groups would you use this method? Where would it not work? Why?

4. What advantages are there to the moderator? Disadvantages?

5. Does this method differ from the way goals are set now? In what ways?

6. Are individuals who expect to dominate the goal-setting process going to like this method? Why? Why not? If they do not like it, what will they do?

7. What is the relationship between conflict management and methods for planning meeting agendas?

8. How can you teach others to plan meeting agendas? To use the goal-setting method?

[*Note*: If your learning situation allows for more time and you would like the learners to practice using Sharpe's methods, use the following Optional Activity in place of the foregoing Objective 4.]

**ALTERNATIVE OBJECTIVE 4: Practice methods for setting goals to minimize conflict when providing public policy education. (20–45 minutes)**

Divide the class into small groups.

Set up the following situation: "Our group is going to determine the goals for the state Extension service for the coming year." Follow the sequence of brainstorming, nominal grouping, and force field analysis techniques described in "Setting Group Goals" to set goals for next year. Go!

Allow 10 minutes for completion of the goal-setting exercise. After 10 minutes, bring the smaller groups back together and lead a group discussion of the Directive Questions for the original Objective 4.

**OBJECTIVE 5: Complete the Evaluation Exercise at the end of Unit III. (15 minutes)**

Ask participants to complete the Evaluation Exercise for UNIT III, using the situation they identified in Unit I. Remind them to keep their written response.

## Concluding Remarks

When the learners have completed the Evaluation Exercise, summarize the key points of this unit.

1. It is important for Extension public policy educators to be aware of facts, myths, values, and ethics as key factors in the determination of public policy.

2. Public policy educators should distinguish between advocacy and public policy education, and work to develop Extension programs that do not advocate any one position or alternative.

3. Certain goal-setting techniques can help Extension educators deal with conflict in their public policy education process.

## Optional Activities

Objectives 6 through 9 are recommended, if time is available, and the participants need or want more opportunity to distinguish among facts, myths, values, and advocacy. Completion of all three objectives will require, at maximum, an additional 1 hour and 30 minutes.

**OBJECTIVE 6: Give the learners additional practice in recognizing the differences among facts, myths, and values. (10 minutes)**

**Puff Is a Good Dog**

This exercise may be used to illustrate how differently we can interpret even common observations. It will give the learners more practice with facts, myths, and values and help explain why opinions based on values are conflict-laden.

Each person should have something to write on. Make the statement: ''Puff is a good dog.'' Then, instruct each person to write down what a good dog is.

Ask participants to read their answers aloud. The answers will vary, because some think a good dog is one that does not bark at night, one that you can comb, one that protects the kids, one that protects the house, and so forth. Come to think of it, the dog is a versatile animal to be able to satisfy so many of us.

Come to the point by asking: Who is right? How can we decide who is right? There is no objective individual test.

*Conclusion:* Our answers are based on individual preferences, our values, and there is no ''sure-fire'' way of measuring or comparing them to say who is right.

**OBJECTIVE 7: Discuss the contributions that facts, myths, values, and ethics make to public policy. (30 minutes)**

Seat groups of four learners at individual tables. Assign one of these four ''positions'' to each group:

Groups A, E, I, etc. are Facts.
Groups B, F, J, etc. are Myths.
Groups C, G, K, etc. are Values.
Groups D, H, L, etc. are Ethics.

Give each group 10 minutes in which to list three reasons why its assigned category contributes the most to public policy. Then, have each group report.

If you can allow for more time, this exercise is even more interesting with ''listeners.'' Such a panel could be drawn from the group. Or, you could bring in a panel of people who are interested in how public policy is made; e.g., a thoughtful politician, a political scientist, an economist, a bureaucrat, a philosopher, or others. One would need to allow more time so the panel members could comment after the reports.

**OBJECTIVE 8: Apply information on ethics and politics to several examples. (15–30 minutes)**

Following are Directive Questions for further discussion, or for an out-of-class exercise that would be appropriate to use after completing the lecture on the Hildreth and Johnson reading (Objective 2).

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1. Can you think of examples in which it is ethically correct to choose not to do the most good?

An example: Ten projects are proposed to reduce soil erosion. It appears all will reduce, to some degree, soil erosion in irrigation runoff.

- What criteria will help you judge the projects? Are any redundant? Is the erosion problem more serious in some areas?
- Which projects have a benefit/cost ratio greater than one (B/C ► 1)? Which projects will create the greatest net benefits? Which combination of projects will allow doing the most good? What projects will have the most political support? Least political liability?

Second example: Four proposals are submitted to reduce teenage pregnancy, most of which are directed at young girls. The facts indicate that the highest rates of teenage pregnancy occur in areas where minority populations are concentrated.

- Ask the individuals or the group to help you list the values one would expect to bear on this case.
- Instruct them not to reveal their own values. This will be good practice.
- Then, lead a group discussion on the ethics of choosing one proposal.

**OBJECTIVE 9: Examine a case study of advocacy in Extension education and analyze its implications. (20 minutes)**

The following scenario and activity will help the learners reflect on subtle ways that Extension educators may unknowingly take positions of advocacy. Read the "Joe Shortbreath" scenario out loud.

Now discuss the following:

1. It is often said, "You are as you are perceived." From the scenario, how might Joe Shortbreath be perceived?

2. What symbols or images in the scenario suggest Joe is taking an advocacy role?

3. Do you know any County Extension agents like Joe? Are they aware of the "subtle" messages of advocacy they convey?

4. How successful a public policy educator do you think Joe would be? Why?

5. Are people's perceptions of Extension educators important? Why?

## Joe Shortbreath: A Case Study in Advocacy

Joe Shortbreath, Possum Holler County Agent, sat quietly at his office desk. It was time to plan ahead, so he thumbed through his ChemAg calendar and looked to the coming months. He cocked his ChemAg hat far back on his head, kicked his feet up on his desk, and sighed as he recalled the recent request from a number of local farmers. They wanted to look into reducing the use of chemicals in their agricultural operations to save money. Joe fretted a bit as he wondered if these people were talking about organic farming. Would they want to revert to old practices long outdated by more modern technological advances? ChemAg was now being asked to sponsor a conference about farming with fewer chemicals. How would this work out? He remembered his luncheon visit yesterday with Fred Clipp from ChemAg, who told him that his company had again agreed to sponsor a trip to the 4-H Club Congress for an individual working in the agronomy project area. For a chemical company, they sure paid their way in the agricultural community!

## Key to Public Policy Quiz

Some of the following statements are facts, some are myths, and some are value judgments. Which are F (fact)? M (myth)? or V (value judgment)?

M 1. If the people had all the facts about any particular problem and really understood them, their decision in regard to what ought to be done to solve it would be almost unanimous.

V 2. Taverns should be permitted to operate on Sunday.

V 3. We need educational programs to keep more young people in the rural area.

V 4. Home Economics agents should be paid the same salary as agricultural agents.

V 5. The national debt is already at the danger point and, under no circumstances, should be increased.

F 6. In an unregulated market, prices are set by the free forces of supply and demand.

V 7. Taxes are now too high and should be reduced.

F 8. As the percentage of the population engaged in farming declines, a nation's material standard of living increases.

F 9. The government has already intervened in many spheres of the economy and certainly could curtail rather than expand its activities.

F 10. Extension workers could be required to take advanced academic training as a prerequisite to professional advancement.

V 11. Any Extension worker who has his or her own selfish interests at heart should not conduct educational work in controversial areas, e.g., school consolidation, at what levels farm prices should be supported, or proper eating habits.

V 12. Interest rates are too high.

V 13. Public policy educators should be on*tap*, not on*top*.

V 14. Reaganomics is working.

V 15. Our defense capability is already more than needed and, therefore, can be cut.

M 16. If interest rates are to come down without a return to inflation, the federal deficit must be cut.

V 17. It is none of the government's business what you and I eat.

*continued*

F/M 18. If one has a history of cholesterol problems, scientific investigations have shown that one must monitor and control cholesterol intake.

F 19. What is advantageous to one individual may be disadvantageous to another.

F 20. The power structure is continually in a state of flux.

F 21. The status quo is rarely preserved over the long run.

V 22. Since Extension has historically served rural agriculturally oriented people, Extension public policy educators have an obligation to promote rural interests in public policy issues.

V 23. Economic justice is to each the same.

V 24. Economic justice is to each according to ability after meeting minimal needs.

F/M 25. We have become a government of special interests.

F 26. Public issues usually are debated in terms of the symptoms rather than the actual problem.

V 27. The farm family has served Americans well and, therefore, must be preserved.

V 28. We are depleting our groundwater supply; therefore, we must find another way to ration it.

V 29. Extension home economists will have their motives impugned if they conduct a public policy education program on the ERA.

M 30. Because of the influence of the cattle industry, it is impossible to conduct a public policy education program on nutrition in beef-producing states.

—Contributed by Barry Flinchbaugh

# Unit IV. Roles for Public Policy Educators

## Leader's Teaching Plan

**Concept:** What are the roles of an Extension public policy educator?

### Introduction

In Unit IV, we reinforce the theme that public policy education can succeed, even though teaching styles differ. A perception persists that all Extension educators have to be information-oriented experts on the topics they address. Most public policy educators' roles vary from issue to issue. In this unit, we will demonstrate how five different, but valid, roles are used in Extension.

**Time to Complete Unit IV:** 1 hour, with optional activity for up to 25 minutes.

**Prerequisite Reading for Learners:**

Sourcebook, Unit IV

### Schedule of Activities for Unit IV

**OBJECTIVE 1: Gain awareness of different types of public policy education now being used in Extension.**
**Time: 50 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 2: Understand how Extension educators can deliver public policy education through Family Community Leadership programs. (25 minutes)**

**OBJECTIVE 3: Complete the Evaluation Exercise at the end of Unit IV.**
**Time: 10 minutes**

## Leader's Teaching Materials

The stereotype of public policy educator is that of a man with a Ph.D. degree in agricultural economics who lectures audiences that are hungry for his tables, charts, and brilliant analyses of the history leading up to the issues that we face today. Some of us fit this stereotype; many of us have used this approach to educate people to more accurate perceptions of reality. Such work is commendable. Its contribution to problem solving needs to be recognized. But, the role of expert, no matter how well it is played

### Resources for Unit IV

**Materials and Equipment Needed to Teach This Unit**

VCR

Sourcebook, Unit IV

**Evaluation Form** (in Learners' Packet)

Evaluation: Unit IV

**Videotape and Videoscript** (in Instructional Aids):

"Policy Educators in Extension" (28 minutes) out, is not the only effective way to teach public policy education.

**OBJECTIVE 1: Gain awareness of different types of public policy education now being used in Extension. (50 minutes)**

Begin viewing the videotape, "Policy Educators in Extension." Approximately halfway through the tape, turn off the videoplayer. See the videoscript in the Instructional Aids to identify clearly the STOP point, if you do not have an opportunity to view the videotape in advance.

## Mini-Lecture: "Types of Public Policy Education"

We are about to view a videotape that introduces examples of public policy educators in three different Extension roles in Wisconsin, Texas, and Washington. We will hear their views and watch them as they participate in public policy education events. We also will meet participants in these programs and learn how they feel about public policy education in Extension.

As you watch, put yourself in the role of the public policy educator. Try to determine what you would do and how you feel about being involved in these kinds of programs.

Discuss the first five questions that follow. Ask the learners to share their questions or concerns regarding the roles depicted and approaches they experienced through the videotape. Try to elicit the help of others in the group as, together, you address the issues they describe.

**Directive Questions:**

1. What new ideas about public policy education did you get from educators Barrows and Knutson?

2. Thinking back through your experience in Extension education, what programs or projects have you been involved in that influenced public policy?

3. Analyzing the projects in which you were involved that related to or influenced public policymaking, would the outcomes have been different if you had taken on the roles Barrows and Knutson identify? Based on what you have just learned, what changes in your educational approach would you make now?

4. What steps would you take to address the needs and increase the involvement of people in all income groups, those from varied racial and ethnic backgrounds, and clients of both sexes? How can Extension education increase the involvement of groups seldom represented in public policy decisionmaking?

5. Analyze the two approaches or types of programming represented by the Wisconsin and Texas specialists. Do they match parts or all of the general definition of public policy education as given at the beginning of this Module?

6. Which of the roles defined have the two specialists used in public policy education programming?

**OBJECTIVE 2: Understand how Extension educators can deliver public policy education through Family Community Leadership programs. (25 minutes)**

Complete the videotape, "Policy Educators in Extension," and use the questions that follow to discuss how this particular role is relevant to public policy education.

**Directive Questions:**

1. According to members of the Washington Family Community Leadership program, how does leadership development relate to public policy education programming? What model is represented here for Extension educators working with volunteers in public policy education?

2. Quickly review: What is the difference between Extension education and advocacy? Why is it important to maintain credibility when representing Extension? Who defines or chooses the issues to be addressed? How does, or can public policy education fit into ongoing Extension programs?

3. In addition to Family Community Leadership programs, what other leadership programs contain public policy education components?

**OBJECTIVE 3: Complete the evaluation exercise at the end of Unit IV. (10 minutes)**

Ask the learners to complete the Evaluation: Unit IV exercise in the Learners' Packet.

## Concluding Remarks

When the participants have completed the Evaluation Exercise, conclude Unit IV by summarizing the public policy educator roles that were presented.

# Unit V. Public Policy Education Methods

## Leader's Teaching Plan

**Concept:** How does one begin to tie together educational theory, public policy education philosophy, and political models and design public policy education programs?

### Introduction

Several methods that put public policymaking in the educational context are provided in Unit V. These techniques direct the educator's efforts toward specific considerations to take into account in planning public policy education programs. For example, two questions that will be answered in this unit are: What should I help my audiences learn? and How does public policy education fit into the policymaking scheme?

Any single public policy education method gives us a systematic way of designing a public policy education program. However, we think it is important to teach several, so that the learner can choose the method most appropriate to the situation and to his or her style. In this unit, the learner is introduced to six methods of policy education: Issue Evolution and Educational Intervention, SHAPES, the Cornell Planning Matrix, the California Group Decision Process, Alternatives and Consequences, and the Iowa Program-Planning Model.

These systematic procedures constitute a repertoire from which the public policy educator can select. Educators tend to choose methods that fit them as well as the job to be done. No one method is best for all situations, nor all Extension agents or specialists. At the end of this unit, learners will be able to compare several methods and to select their own "preferred" procedure.

**Time to Complete Unit V:** 8 hours, with optional activity for up to an additional 3 hours.

**Prerequisite Reading for Learners:**

Sourcebook, Unit V
Review "Headlines, A Simulation" (in Learners' Packet)

### Schedule of Activities for Unit V

**OBJECTIVE 1: Introduce proven public policy education methods.
Time: 10 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 2: Learn how the evaluation of an issue can determine "teachable moments," and what might be done at each stage of a public issue.
Time: 35 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 3: Learn how to monitor and evaluate a public policy education effort and progress toward the resolution of a public problem. Apply the SHAPES method.
Time: 1 hour, 10 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 4: Analyze public policy situations and identify possible educational programs.
Time: 5 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 5: Learn how to facilitate the decisionmaking process of groups and how to bring them to closure in making decisions.
Time: 50 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 6: Describe the alternatives and consequences approach.
Time: 55 minutes**

**OBJECTIVE 7: Compare and contrast different public policy education methods.
Time: 30 minutes**

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**OBJECTIVE 8:** Learn how one Extension agent organized and handled public policy subject matter.
Time: 40 minutes

**OBJECTIVE 9:** Gain awareness of the evolving nature of public policy decisions.
Time: 1 hour, 30 minutes

**OBJECTIVE 10:** Apply information from simulation experience and identify appropriate entrees for educational programming.
Time: 30 minutes

**OBJECTIVE 11:** Review appropriate education methods and public policy education guidelines.
Time: 20 minutes

**OBJECTIVE 12:** Complete Evaluation Exercise: Unit V and the Final Evaluation of Module 6.
Time: 40 minutes

## Optional Activities

**OBJECTIVE 13:** Apply the Issue Evolution–Educational Intervention method in an assigned issue.
Time: 30–45 minutes

**OBJECTIVE 14:** Review and discuss the Iowa method for planning a public affairs program.
Time: 10–20 minutes

**OBJECTIVE 15:** Gain expanded awareness of the evolving nature of public policy decisions.
Time: 2 hours

## Resources for Unit V

**Materials and Equipment Needed to Teach This Unit:**

VCR
Newsprint
Colored marking pens
Long sheet of butcher paper (4 feet by 8 feet)
Overhead projector
Blackboard and chalk (optional)
A light-colored felt pen for each participant in the Simulation
Copies of the identity cards and clue cards (found within the Simulation)
Masking tape
Name tags (large)
Envelopes (large enough to hold identity card for each participant)
Rubber cement
A 3x5 blank card for each participant (ballot)
Sourcebook, Unit V
"Headlines": A Simulation—Leader's Teaching Plan (in Leader's Guide)
"Illustrated Talk" (in Leader's Guide)
House, V.W., *Shaping Public Policy*, Chaps. 8 and 9

*continued*

**Publications (in Learners' Packet)**

House, V. W., "Issue Evolution and Educational Intervention" and "Choosing a Method"—Fact Sheets
"California's Group Decision Process"—Fact Sheet
Edelman, M. A., "Distinguishing Symptoms From Public Policy Problems" —Fact Sheet
Egan, C., "SHAPES: Egan Style"—Fact Sheet
Egan, C., and W. F. Brinkel, Jr., "An Application of SHAPES: 'Operation Clean Sweep'—Stillwater Solid-Waste Program"—Fact Sheet
Hahn, A.J., "Cornell's Planning Matrix"—Fact Sheet
Flinchbaugh, B. L., "The Alternatives-Consequences Method of Policy Education," and "Ten Commandments for Public Policy Education"—Fact Sheets
Handout for "Headlines": A Simulation
Bridging Activity for "Headlines": A Simulation

**Publications (in Instructional Aids):**

Barrows, Richard, "Public Policy Education"
Sharpe, Dave, "Setting Group Goals—*Montguide*

**Evaluation Forms (in Learners' Packet)**

"Evaluation: Unit V"
"Final Evaluation of Module 6"

**Videotapes and Transparencies (in Instructional Aids)**

"Gratto's Issue Evolution Model," videotape by V. W. House (16 minutes)
"SHAPES, Egan Style," videotape by C. Egan (19 minutes)
"A Group Decision Process" videotape by L. T. Wallace (26 minutes)
"How to Do Policy Education," videotape by B. Flinchbaugh (25 minutes)
"Alternatives and Consequences in Extension Home Economics," videotape by E. Felts-Grabarski (20 minutes)
"Phases of Issue Evolution" (Transparency 7)
Cornell Planning Matrix:
  "Situational Analysis" (Transparency 8)
  "Possible Educational Programs" (Transparency 9)
"Illustrated Talk" (Transparencies 10 through 18)

**Relevant Resources in the Selected Readings**

Flinchbaugh, B. L., "How to Do Policy Education—'Ten Commandments.'" Prepared for Module 6.
House, V. W., "Issue Evolution and Educational Intervention." Prepared for Module 6.
Moore, E., "Three Directions for Public Policy Programming." Prepared for Module 6.
Wallace, T., "The California Group Decision Process." Prepared for Module 6.

## Leader's Teaching Materials

**OBJECTIVE 1: Introduce proven public policy education methods. (10 minutes)**

### Mini-Lecture: "Introduction"

Two key words in public policy education, "alternatives" and "consequences," permeate the history of public policy education. These words are keys to educating about controversial public issues, without ourselves becoming controversial. These key words are put into a useful context in Flinchbaugh's videotape, "How to Do Policy Education," in this unit, which is supported by two Fact Sheets on the same topic. These materials are just one of the methods of public policy education offered in this unit.

In Unit I, we learned the basic terms and concepts of public policy education. Unit II "fattened" our understanding of politics by giving us models we can use as tools to analyze public policymaking. In Unit III, through discussions of facts, myths, values, ethics, and advocacy, we discovered some of the problematic aspects of public policy education. In Unit IV, a number of different roles or approaches to public policy education were demonstrated. In this unit, "Public Policy Education Methods," we begin to tie all of the foregoing units together. Public policy education philosophy, policymaking models, and educational theory are woven together into public policy education methods. Like models of policymaking, public policy education methods give us tools to analyze public issues. Through such analysis, we improve our ability (1) to decide whether or not to involve ourselves and (2) to design effective public policy education programs.

In Unit V of the Sourcebook, a number of public policy education methods are introduced. The methods described are all founded on some concept or model of political behavior. If you have already read that unit, by now you see that a variety of approaches can be used to teach about public policy. Let us consider the "bundle" of methods described in Unit V of the Sourcebook. At the end of our study, we will see how they all compare.

**OBJECTIVE 2: Learn how the evolution of an issue can determine "teachable moments" and what might be done at each stage of a public issue. (35 minutes)**

### Issue Evolution and Educational Intervention

All public policy education methods are built on models of political behavior. Nowhere is this more obvious than in Gratto's Issue Evolution method, which actually incorporates a model of the policymaking process, in which the educational intervention appropriate at each step is detailed. After the model is used to describe an issue, the educator can overlay a list of potential educational "interventions" for each stage of the issue.

The following steps are recommended in presenting the method:

1. Present the issue evolution part of the method on a large chalkboard.

2. Draw the educational possibilities from the participants. Add them to the issue evolution method.

3. Present an example. Federal agricultural legislation makes a good example, because it has evolved on a four-year cycle (five-year this round) for many decades. Ask the learners to tell you what stage that issue is in now.

Use the Directive Questions for class discussion.

**Directive Questions:**

1. Issue evolution has a circularity to it: it is argued that the same issue may go through cycles of being considered over and over again. Is this realistic? Can you think of examples in which this has happened?

2. Do issues evolve as this method describes? Is this consistent with the models of policymaking studied in Unit III?

3. Is the list of potential educational activities suggested in this method complete? Where would you expect to see the "teachable moments" appear?

4. What is the implication of the word "potential?" Are not Extension educators obliged to "intervene" or educate about issues when we can? Who should decide when we are going to present a public policy program?

5. The information says that Extension educators should not tell people what the best solution is. What if the best choice is obvious? What if one solution would be a tragic mistake? Should I not point this out? What if there are people involved who are not capable advocates for their interests?

6. What is meant by "evaluation" in this method?

7. Which Extension specialists are most likely to assist with implementation? With evaluation? At other stages?

8. How far can Extension educators go in assisting people with making a choice? Gratto says that we can teach people how the choice will be made. We can even improve their skills and teach them about politics. Can we also help organize them for action? [*Note:* The answer is no. We teach people how to be effective in public life in our leadership development programs. But, organizing people for action is practicing politics, and that is the way such action will be perceived.]

**OBJECTIVE 3: Learn how to monitor and evaluate a public policy education effort and progress toward the resolution of a public problem. Apply the SHAPES method. (1 hour, 10 minutes)**

Read the Fact Sheet and view the videotape, "How to Use SHAPES," in advance of the lecture.

Use the material that follows to introduce SHAPES as a method of documenting projects. This method emphasizes who is involved, over time, and uses Beal's Social Action Process as a guide to progress. Involvement over time is compared to the steps of the Social Action Process.

Begin with the 5-minute mini-lecture, "Introduction to SHAPES, Egan Style." (See next page). Follow with the videotape, "SHAPES, Egan Style" (20 minutes).

Review Fact Sheet: "SHAPES, Egan Style" (5 minutes).

Use the case study, "Operation Clean Sweep: Stillwater Solid-Waste Program—An Application of SHAPES"—Fact Sheet, for the following activity:

Form four task groups: hold group size to no more than six. Groups as small as two are adequate for these activities.

**Group Tasks:**

Give the first three groups 10 minutes to complete the following

- Historians—List the events, then number them chronologically.

## Mini-Lecture: "Introduction to SHAPES, Egan Style"

SHAPES was developed to evaluate projects. As modified and applied by Egan, it retains its evaluative function, but also is useful for designing an educational program and monitoring progress. SHAPES is essentially a system for deciding who is likely to be affected by some issue. Knowing who will be affected simultaneously provides a list of who might become involved and who might be receptive to an educational program. The particular significance of Egan's "style" with SHAPES is less in how he adapted it than in how he applied it to practical problems that County Extension agents typically face.

Egan's adaptation combines the steps of Beal's and Bohlen's Social Action Process with SHAPES. The resulting model is a matrix, with the Social Action Process steps down the left axis. Across the top is the series of events, over time. In the cells, codes record who was involved at each point in the process.

Egan's Fact Sheet provides details of the parts of his SHAPES method. In addition, the Learners' Packet includes a case study documenting how he applied SHAPES to an issue that his county could not avoid: when the state condemned the county dump, something had to be done. Egan also has used this method to evaluate programs on saline seeps and to design programs on weed control. Egan recognized that problems many of us would like to treat as technical are, in fact, social issues.

- Involvers—List who was involved, in the order of involvement. Code the first group or person "A," the next, "B," and so on.
- Chartists—Make a SHAPES chart with lines for rows and columns; enter the steps of the Social Action Process in big letters.
- After the first three groups have completed their work, the next group gets another 10 minutes to complete its task.
- SHAPERS—Collect the information from the three groups and enter it in the cells of an empty SHAPES chart (like Egan's), as time permits.

When the SHAPERS have finished their chart, briefly review it as a group. Then use the Directive Questions that follow to lead a discussion of the SHAPES method.

**Directive Questions:**

1. How useful is this method? Are there situations in which you could use it in your state or county?

2. Is there anything revolutionary about SHAPES as Egan uses it? Anything unique in his applications?

3. Egan advises that the method we use is less important than the fact that we use one. What does he mean? Do you agree?

4. Whom did Egan involve in deciding whether or not to offer a public policy education program? Who should be involved? How would you make that decision in your area?

5. Do you see any similarities between the SHAPES method, which was the Social Action Process, and the Stages of Decisionmaking model?

**OBJECTIVE 4: Introduce a public policy education method that helps the educator analyze policy situations and identify possible educational programs. (5 minutes)**

## Cornell's Planning Matrix

Prior to presenting "Cornell's Planning Matrix," review Unit V in the Sourcebook so that you are familiar with the "Cornell's Planning Matrix"—Fact Sheet. This matrix will be applied fully by the learners. At this point, your job is to be sure the learners examine this matrix, in preparation for using it later in this unit. Go over the matrix briefly, making it clear to the learners that they will be using this method later in this unit of the Module.

**OBJECTIVE 5: Learn how to facilitate the decisionmaking process of groups and how to bring them to closure in making decisions. (50 minutes)**

## Mini-Lecture: "California Group Decision Process"

Suppose you are asked to help some group of decisionmakers come to agreement about its public policy preferences. What if the topic is one with which you are familiar, but you are not an expert on it? Further, suppose that you expect the group members to commit themselves to a series of meetings to identify the alternatives, research them, and develop recommendations. How could you facilitate such a process? What are the risks of doing so? Of not doing so?

When groups have to make decisions, many forces come into play. Do you have to anticipate all of them? How flexible can you be, while maintaining a systematic process? The Group Decision Process, developed by L. T. Wallace and several County Extension directors in California, satisfies these requirements. Let us view a videotape of Wallace describing this process. Then, we will discuss it.

View the videotape, "A Group Decision Process" (26 minutes)

**Directive Questions:**

1. What are the elements or components of Wallace's process?

2. How does this Group Decision Process differ from the other methods studied?

3. What is the educator's role in this process? Is it a role that you would like? What teaching skills are needed?

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4. What are the advantages of this process? Do you see any disadvantages?

**OBJECTIVE 6: Describe the alternatives and consequences approach. (55 minutes)**

## Mini-Lecture: "How to Do Policy Education"

The title of this videotape (and the two Fact Sheets by Flinchbaugh in this unit of your Learners' Packet) makes it sound as if it is the only one we need to view. It is, in fact, an essential reference in which the concept of alternatives and consequences is described. The essence of this concept is that if you can restate an issue so as to put it in a problem-solving context, alternative solutions can be inventoried and their consequences can be discussed rationally. You may have had an opportunity to read Flinchbaugh's Fact Sheets on this subject. Now we will view the videotape presentation and discuss it. As you watch, try to capture the principles for using the alternatives and consequences approach to public policy education.

Show the videotape, "How to Do Policy Education" (25 minutes). Use the Directive Questions for a discussion of the alternatives and consequences process.

**Directive Questions:**

1. What is the essence of the alternatives and consequences approach to public policy education?

2. What other methods include this idea?

3. Flinchbaugh gives the impression that this approach is a powerful one. Do you agree? What are the sources of its power?

4. What is the educator's role in this approach? Flinchbaugh states that the educator must be an expert on the subject. How important is this?

Review with the group the Fact Sheet, "Ten Commandments for Public Policy Education" (in Learners' Packet). Use the following Directive Questions for discussion.

**Directive Questions:**

1. Do you find these commandments useful? Why? Why not?

2. If you used these commandments to structure a public policy program, would they provide a systematic approach? Are they consistent with, for example, Egan's approach in using SHAPES?

3. Are all ten commandments necessary? Could any be omitted or modified?

**OBJECTIVE 7: Compare and contrast different methods of public policy education. (30 minutes)**

Some criteria for comparing and contrasting the public policy education methods that have been presented are:

- Appropriateness?
- Data requirements?
- How well do they handle conflicting data?
- How well do they handle value conflicts?
- Degree to which they are systematic?
- Static versus dynamic qualities?
- Objectivity?

You may use these criteria to discuss the following Directive Questions with the learners. The key points to bring out are noted in brackets at the end of each question.

**Directive Questions**:

1. What are the common features of the methods of public policy education? [Purpose, circularity, evolving nature of issues, based on public policymaking models.]

2. How would you choose among the methods to design a public policy education program? [Fits your style? Fits the situation? Fits the people you expect to teach? Other?]

3. How do the public policy education methods differ? [In their demands for expertise? In the requirements they put on the Extension educator? One-shot versus a series of events? Target audience?]

4. How would you revise a method to fit an issue in your county or state?

5. Which method best connects policymaking with public policy?

6. If Gratto had used "Kings and Kingmakers" in the Issue Evolution portion of his method, what would it imply about educational opportunities?

**OBJECTIVE 8: Learn how one Extension agent organized and handled public policy subject matter. (40 minutes)**

The videotape, "Alternatives and Consequences in Extension Home Economics," by Edie Felts-Grabarski, demonstrates the application of the alternatives and consequences approach to issues faced by a home economics Extension agent in northern Wisconsin.

Felts-Grabarski's activities demonstrate the application of the alternatives and consequences approach to her county programs. View the videotape and use the following Directive Questions in the discussion.

**Directive Questions:**

1. Comment on Felts-Grabarski's programs. Are these problems similar to the ones you face?

2. Does Felts-Grabarski give you any ideas that you can apply? Give specific examples.

## Designing a Public Policy Education Program

### Leader's Teaching Plan

**Concept:** How are public policy education programs designed?

The objective of **Module 6: Education for Public Decisions** is to expand and improve public policy education by teaching Extension agents and specialists how to use its philosophy and methods. As learners progressed through the units, they applied the concepts in their evaluation exercises. Thus, they have gained experience through structured practice, unit by unit.

At this point, a group simulation exercise provides an opportunity for guided practice and discussion. This portion of Unit V is a group simulation called "Headlines." Instructions for its use follow in the Leader's Teaching Materials. "Headlines" deals with a public issue common to many communities: development of a shopping mall that will compete with downtown stores. The case is similar to many issues that Extension educators face.

A short version of "Headlines" can be completed in 1 hour and 30 minutes. You also can continue the simulation for another 30 minutes, for a total of 2 hours. The information on the simulation describes the options. Optional activities for Unit V are listed following this design exercise.

"Headlines" deals with an issue. To "bridge" or connect the public policy issue to Extension education, the Cornell Program Planning Matrix, introduced earlier in this unit, is used *after* the simulation. The Cornell system is to analyze the situation and to identify potential Extension education programs and their likely effects.

The Cornell Planning Matrix is a systematic approach to designing public policy education programs. Learners are encouraged to study it and learn to use it. If they find that they prefer one of the other planning tools introduced in this unit, encourage them to try it and compare the methods.

Finally, the learners are asked to apply the Cornell Matrix system, or some preferred alternative method or combination of methods, to their issue in the concluding Evaluation Exercise for this Module. "An Illustrated Talk" and the Evaluation Exercise will require an additional 1 hour and 30 minutes to complete.

The purpose of this exercise is to apply learners' knowledge to design an effective and feasible public policy education program that they can propose to their administrators. Completing this exercise will prepare participants to initiate real-world public policy education in their state or community, and to put their new public policy education skills into practice.

**Time to Complete This Exercise:**
3 hours, with optional activity for up to an additional 2 hours.

## Leader's Teaching Materials

Prior to the simulation exercise, preview the pages of the Simulation Packet that follows for:

1. Introduction to "Headlines: A Simulation." (in Learner's Packet).

2. Instructions for the Leader, which include:

- A list of the materials and supplies you will need to complete the activity;
- A list of necessary advance preparation you must make;
- Instructions for how to carry out the simulation activity;
- Instructions for concluding the activity; and
- Instructions for carrying out the Optional "Tier 2" of the simulation.

## Instructions for the Leader

**Time required:**

Tier 1, only: 1 hour, 30 minutes

Tier 2: An additional 30 minutes

**Number of participants per group:**

Minimum of 8; maximum of 18

**Materials Needed**

*For each participant:*

- "Headlines: A Simulation" (in Learners' Packet).
- A name tag for the character to be portrayed (in Leader's Guide).
- An identity and clue cue for that character (in Leader's Guide).

*For the leader:*

- All of the above.
  Instructions.

**Supplies needed:**

- Colored marking pens, one light-colored for each participant
- Pad of newsprint
- Masking tape
- Name tags (large)

- Envelope (large enough to hold identity cards for each participant)

- Rubber cement

- A 3x5 blank card for each participant (ballot)

**Environment needed:**

A well-lighted room with a "council table" in the center and chairs around it. Chairs for all other players should be available in the room. Space will be required to caucus privately, at times. Some small groups may want to leave the room, so a large hallway or auxiliary room should be available.

**Before the workshop:**

1. Read the materials and instructions.

2. Photocopy the Tier 1 materials (identity and clue cards) on white paper.

3. Photocopy the Tier 2 materials (identity and clue cards) on colored paper.

4. Cut the identity and clue cards apart.

5. Place the Tier 1 identity and clue cue, along with the character's name tag, in an envelope.

6. Attach each envelope to an Assignment sheet. LIGHTLY PENCIL THE PARTICIPANT'S NAME ON THE OUTSIDE CORNER OF THE ENVELOPE.

7. Retain the Tier 2 identity cards and clue cues to hand out later.

8. On a large sheet of newsprint write the ballot issue:

**Shall the citizens of Billington be consulted by special election before the Billington City Council may expand any public funds connected with parking improvements?**

VOTE: YES or NO

Cover the writing with a blank piece of newsprint. Hang it or place it on an easel by the council table.

If you plan to use the Tier 2 activities also, write on another newsprint sheet:

**Shall the Billington comprehensive plan be amended to allow major retail development at the old nursery site on North and Central Roads?**

VOTE: YES or NO

Put this ballot title under the first one, by the council table.

9. Have newsprint, tape, and felt tip pens available in the room for participants to use.

10. Make sure activities stay within the time limits, or proceed to the next step if participants finish before the allotted time is up.

**OBJECTIVE 9: Gain awareness of the evolving nature of public policy decisions. (1 hour, 30 minutes)**

**During the Simulation:**

Although the simulation is intended to conclude Module 6, the directions here are given as if it were a stand-alone activity to be carried out with an inexperienced group.

Welcome the participants. Explain that they are about to take part in an action-filled case study.

1. *Warm-up*: Ask them to take a moment to pair with a neighbor and learn in what ways that partner has been involved in public policy decisions before. Has he or she written letters to the editor, served on boards or commissions, attended "town meetings," or helped with campaigns? Allow about 5 minutes for this paired exchange of information.

Call the group back to order. Go around the room and have each partner introduce the other. For example, "This is Donna Jones. She has served on the city zoning board and is active in the PTA. She enjoys following national events on the evening news."

This warm-up exercise will enliven the group while allowing you to assess participants for later distribution of the roles. Key roles, which are explained later, should be assigned to the more animated or extraverted members of the group. Actual previous public-event experience is immaterial.

2. *To Begin* (Tier 1): Say something like, "The work you are about to do is based on real events in an American community. Names and specifics have been altered to protect privacy. This is no longer factual history. Many parts of this situation will be like ones that have touched you, in your community, or may do so in the future. The exercise will rapidly become realistic.

"You are about to receive a background sheet to familiarize you with your town, Billington. Take a short time to read this; mark on it as you go." (Distribute Background Sheets and felt pens.)

"Now here are the headlines from a local newspaper. Review these at your own speed. Feel free to underline and mark on them any way you like. You will be keeping all of these papers to refer to later; you do not need to memorize anything." (Distribute copies of "Headlines Tier 1.") "Ready? Go ahead."

While participants review the headlines, you are to assemble identity clues and prepare them for distribution. When most or all participants have concluded their reviewing, usually about 15 minutes, proceed to the next phase.

3. *Distribution of Identities*: Eighteen is the maximum number of participants. If you have more, consider splitting them into two groups and duplicate the proceedings in separate rooms, so that all participants will have active roles. Select as many characters as there are participants. Always use the first six (key) characters first. Try to balance the number of "pro" and "con" roles.

Distribute identity and assignment sheets to each player. Each personal identity is accompanied by one or more secret clues, which helps broaden understanding of the situation. Later, during the actual council hearings, participants use their secret clues to enliven the proceedings.

Key roles are David Abel, Mayor Hart, Jean Grannis, John Kearn, Brian Gundel, and Council President Anne Wright. Persons to play these roles should be determined from earlier observation of participants during the warm-up exercise, and given to the more extraverted participants. These six characters must be played for the simulation to be effective. Additional roles should be distributed so that "pro" and "con" viewpoints are equally represented in the final mix of characters. The workshop leader may take a role and participate, too.

4. *The Council Hearing*: Return to the participants after their 20-minute preparation time. "We are now ready to begin. Will Council President Anne Wright, and two other council members, please be seated at the front of the room and convene the meeting?"

The Council President has already been instructed by her identity card to call on each participant by name, at least once. This ensures that everyone participates. Afterward, she may recognize anyone who continues to wish to speak. When people have finished making all their points, or if you are pressed for time, the meeting is called to a close. Thirty minutes is the appropriate length of time for this phase.

5. *The Vote*: You, the leader, then intervene and say, "The Billington City Council hearing is concluded. Everyone had a chance to express his or her viewpoint. We will now measure the effectiveness of the testimony by holding an actual election on Proposition One. For this vote, forget your recent role for a moment, and react to the ballot, based on your own assessment of the arguments you have just heard presented.

"Here is the actual ballot title. Please take one of these small pieces of paper and vote secretly. When you have voted, fold the paper and send it this way. You may then break for (lunch or other reason). When you return, we will discuss the results of this election, and conduct a debriefing. See you at ________ o'clock."

Distribute small pieces of any kind of paper for a secret ballot, and reveal the ballot title by removing the blank piece of newsprint covering it:

SHALL THE CITIZENS OF BILLINGTON BE CONSULTED BY SPECIAL ELECTON BEFORE THE BILLINGTON CITY COUNCIL MAY EXPEND ANY PUBLIC FUNDS CONNECTED WITH PARKING IMPROVEMENTS? (VOTE YES OR NO.)

Collect the ballots; take a break. During the break, tally the results.

## Tier 1: Identity and Clue Cues

### The First Six Essential Characters

You are DAVID ABEL, President of Trigon Development Corporation, and a real estate developer. Born and reared locally. Attended Eastern schools. Returned to make your mark.

"It's impossible to shop conveniently now. A weatherized mall is needed. It probably can't be done downtown, but let us try anyway. Beware Fairview."

---

You are ANNE WRIGHT, Billington City Council President. You must appear neutral during these hearings. Your heart is with the downtown efforts. You are married to a prominent attorney.

You will convene and chair the City Council's public hearing. Bring the group to order and then call on each character by name. After each has spoken, you may entertain additional comments from characters who have already had a chance to speak. Close the meeting when comments have ceased, or if you are running out of time.

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You are BRIAN GUNDEL. Third generation Billington. Influential family. Stockbroker.

"Why throw away a townsite with a 120-year-old history? A community without a downtown loses its heart. The empty buildings are an invitation to crime."

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You are KEN HART, outspoken Mayor of Billington; second term.

"The public has already made a substantial investment in the existing Central Business District (CBD). Why ignore that investment and heritage? Capitalize on renovation to a bygone era."

---

You are JOHN KEARN, City Hall observer and champion of private enterprise. You were born in East Germany, but escaped. You are proud of your naturalized citizenship. You own a small but successful company, Jockman's Towing. You oppose the Mayor's and the Planning Director's plans for subsidized parking, and are organizing a citizen group, "Keep It Simple" (KIS), to influence policy.

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You are JEAN GRANNIS. You have worked your way up the hard way within the city hierarchy. Now you direct a department.

"Citizens can't have it both ways. If we don't invest in the downtown now to improve shopping, we will have to invest in it anyway later to try to salvage the remains. Either way, it will cost money."

*continued*

## Additional Characters, Tier 1

You are GREG DODDEN. Although your family has owned a fine jewelry shop for three generations, you are one of the small retailers who cannot afford the increased rents in any new mall, downtown or out of town. It should be made clear to others that the "majors" always get cheap or free rent in these developments. It's the little guy like yourself who is supposed to carry the construction costs. Few can.

---

You are GLORIA SUMMERLAND. An older person, you do not in any way want your tax burden increased because you are on a fixed income. You are John Kearn's right-hand woman.

"Why in the world should the government help increase any private developer's profit line? Besides, the downtown merchants are notoriously uncaring about their customers. All you have to do is look at the meager selection of goods. And most of the clerks act like they don't even care whether you spend your money there or not. Some of them seem downright rude."

---

You are CLAIRE JOSHUA, wealthy matron and wife of an insurance executive. You are appalled by the lack of good merchandise to choose from. You wouldn't shop for your family in downtown Billington if it killed you! If anything negative happens down there, the merchants deserve it. You are one of the people who always leaves the area to do any serious shopping. You would love to have a new mall on the edge of town to shop in.

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You are LARRY ALLMAN, owner of Billington's oldest business, Allman Feed and Seed. You don't think any mall is needed, downtown or elsewhere. You are not interested in selling your key property just so the downtown can be "transformed." All that means to you is that there won't be any place for a feed mill operation. You'll have nowhere that you can conveniently relocate.

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You are JOHN GRAND. You are President of Sandhem, Inc. Your firm will build a mall downtown, if someone else pays the cost of the parking spaces. The land downtown is just too expensive to do the project any other way. Your firm likes Billington and its market potential, but you have to make a profit.

---

You are DAN KORTLEVER. You are current president of the real estate board. You own the city's largest real estate brokerage.

"It's time we sent signals to the outside world that we are ready to entertain new growth proposals. We're dying on the vine here. No new significant project has been permitted for years. This may be our last chance."

*continued*

## Additional Characters, Tier 1

You are THOMAS PELLA, Professor of Humanities and Philosophy at BWU. You are adamantly opposed to development outside the current city core. The city should increase everyone's taxes substantially and do a first-rate downtown rehabilitation, complete with fountains, plazas, and more museum and gallery space.

You are AMY ROOS. You are a housewife with two small children. Your husband drives a city bus. You are sick and tired of going to stores downtown that close at 5:30. It doesn't give you any time to shop after your husband gets home. It's really hard to handle a stroller and a rambunctious toddler on the city streets in the rain.

You are CLAUDE WILEY, retired railroad worker. As far as you're concerned, we all ought to pay for everything as we go. There's no reason for the citizens to build anything. Let private enterprise do it, or forget it. Your wife, Esther, disagrees strongly.

You are ESTHER WILEY. You love the current downtown. You were born and reared here. You are retired now, and on a limited income. It would be hard, but you would support a tax increase to help pay for downtown parking. Your husband, Claude, disagrees strongly.

You are CHIEF TERRY MELTON, Chief of Police for Billington. You will protect the city wherever it grows, but you think the Council ought to be aware of certain statistics that show high increases in arson, crime, and vagrancy in abandoned downtowns.

You are CHRIS KLEID. You own a pet and grooming store in the Southend Business District of Billington. While your shopping area of town is much smaller, and offers fewer services, you still see no reason why the downtown merchants should have taxpayer-financed improvements, while other business areas of the town get none. It's not fair!

6. *Debriefing*: "The results of your balloting were ______ yes, ______ no. Proposition One (passed) (failed)."

"In the community where some of these events actually occurred, Proposition One passed by a narrow margin, 51 percent to 49 percent. Sandhem, Inc., withdrew their efforts for any downtown redevelopment, and the community began to discuss whether or not to allow large-scale retail development outside the central business district.

"Let us do some debriefing work now by listing all the issues that were revealed by your efforts in this case study. Later, in what we call a Bridging Activity, we can ask where educational intervention might have made a difference."

As workshop leader, you then ask one or more participants to step to the blackboard or butcher paper and have the entire group contribute issues. Twenty or so should emerge readily such as:

- How can selection of goods be increased?
- Should support for present businesses be given while enhancing shopping?
- Is public investment for private development appropriate? Ethical?
- Is a city responsible for protecting small businesses when franchises want to compete?
- Who pays for the consequences of these decisions?
- How will families and ordinary citizens benefit?

YOU MAY NOW GO EITHER TO THE CONCLUSION (STEP 8) OR TO THE TIER 2 (STEP 7)

7. *Using Tier 2:* You may now go through a second level of the case study by distributing copies of "Headlines Tier 2." This exercise focuses more closely on the planning and profit issues. It gets to the actual vote on the location of the mall. It takes some of the major characters and causes them to switch sides, by changing their jobs.

Administer "Headlines Tier 2," more briefly. Pass out the new headlines; allow about 10 minutes for review. No character changes are necessary.

Pass out Tier 2 clues. Announce a 15-minute preparation period. Indicate that members may caucus to increase support for their views.

Have Anne Wright reconvene the City Council, and everyone, including interested citizens, speak as long as they have something new to say. Take a second secret ballot based on:

SHALL THE BILLINGTON COMPREHENSUVE PLAN BE AMENDED TO ALLOW MAJOR RETAIL DEVELOPMENT AT THE OLD NURSERY SITE ON NORTH AND CENTRAL ROADS?

After a short break, disclose the results of the voting, and proceed to debriefing activities as before. List the new issues involved, and discuss how it was for characters to change sides (this actually happened, as presented).

Tell your participants, "You have certain concerns in your community. You can assess needs in that environment, and identify issues. We will now go on to a final activity that involves educational program planning for your community's needs."

## Tier 2: Identity and Clue Cues

KEN HART, employed by Trigon now.

"We tried it downtown. It couldn't be done. Now let's get off the dime before we lose all potential revenue to a rival development in the next county to the south."

JOHN KEARN.

"Private enterprise should be allowed to work freely. Where do the major retailers prefer to be? On the freeway, of course. And that's the old nursery site. Let's get zoning ordinances out of the marketplace and let the stores locate where they prefer."

JEAN GRANNIS, employed by Trigon now.

"The market and the voters have spoken. Let's hurry to rezone the old nursery site so that we can have a fine new project quickly."

ANNE WRIGHT. You will again convene and lead the proceedings. This time, you will make the one observation, as one who previously served for six years on the Planning Commission, that it seems idiocy to move the whole core of the city four miles north, just for convenience sake.

DAVID ABEL.

"I stepped aside last year to give downtown every opportunity. It can't be done down there. We have the finest site in this county for a suburban regional mall; let's build it. The concerns about potential decay downtown are just scare tactics."

GREG DODDEN. You oppose the Bellaire rezone. You won't be able to afford the rent there.

"Does this community want a mall full of franchise managers? Isn't it healthier to have a lot of independently owned and operated small businesses?"

BRIAN GUNDEL.

"This rezone would be the end of Billington as we have known it. We will see wholesale vacancies and dilapidation downtown. It would be a planner's nightmare."

LARRY ALLMAN. Bellaire looks good to you.

"It's about time we had some progress."

*continued*

GLORIA SUMMERLAND.

"Of course the rezone should occur. We won't have to pay for any parking this way."

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CHRIS KLEID.

"Don't allow the rezone. A large new mall would not only starve the downtown merchants out of business, it will do the same to many of the city's other, smaller business districts. Do we want just one giant shopping choice?"

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CLAIRE JOSHUA.

"The sooner the rezone occurs, and the building commences, the better. Whatever the downtown merchants get, they deserve."

---

THOMAS PELLA.

"Every other town in America has one of these malls. They all look alike. Is that what we want for this beautiful town? Tell Pontiac Progress to go back to Michigan."

---

CHIEF TERRY MELTON.

If the Council supports this rezone, you would like to know where the additional funds for more police officers will come from. Will Trigon or Pontiac Progress pay for them? You'll need more officers in the old downtown, and you'll need more officers for the Bellaire site.

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DAN KORTLEVER.

"The zoning in this town has always been too restrictive. Here's our chance to do something about it at a time that it could really matter."

---

CLAUDE WILEY.

"I've changed my mind. I'm not interested in a new mall anywhere. I like Billington just like it is."

---

ESTHER WILEY.

"We don't want a vacant downtown with bums in it. Older people can walk down there now and feel safe. What would it be like when Bellaire is built? Terrible!"

*continued*

JOHN GRAND.

Indeed, your firm's days in Billington are over. There's no way you could get the squabbling downtown property owners to sell at a rate reasonable enough to allow Sandhem, Inc., to be able to pay for the parking improvements. The mall will really only benefit a few.

---

AMY ROOS.

"I'd love Bellaire to be built. It would be so much easier to shop at night in a weatherized space, and have plenty of easy parking that's free."

8. *Conclusion*: To conclude the activity you might say: "It's easy now to see that there were many issues wrapped up in this community's concern about its shopping area. Sometimes what appeared on the surface to be issues was camouflage. Often decisions and policy are made on the basis of special interests with little citizen input, or consideration for the general welfare. As educators, we could serve our communities well by designing educational programs around public concerns to enhance the quality of decisions that go into public policy. To do that, Extension educators need to keep in touch with how decisions are made in their communities so they can design relevant programs. This activity was intended to help you get in touch—vicariously—with that process.

**OBJECTIVE 10: Apply information from the simulation experience and identify appropriate entrees for educational programming. (30 minutes)**

## A Bridging Activity

### Goals

This activity requires that the learner step back from his or her involvement in the "headlines" simulation and assume the reflective role of an Extension educator. Learners are to consider how the situation might have changed if education had been part of the policy process.

The purpose of "bridging" the gap between policy and education, in this case study, is to encourage discussion and reflection that will help the learner construct a "bridge" between the simulation and real life.

### Directions:

1. Read the instructions given in "Bridging Activity: Developing an Educational Program for Billington" (in Learners' Packet).

2. Divide the learners into groups of four or five. Ask them to read the instructions for the worksheet activity and begin filling in the grids on the "Situation Analysis" and "Possible Educational Programs" (in Learners' Packet), based on what they learned about the citizens of Billington during the simulation. (Allow 5 minutes for this.)

3. After the forms are completed, give each group newsprint and felt tipped pens. Ask them to outline a policy education program that could have taken place before or during the time the shopping malls were being debated, and before the final decisions were made. (Give them 10 minutes to do this.) Post these outlines around the room.

4. In a larger group (no more than 20), spend 15 minutes critiquing the policy education outlines as to:

- Effective timing of educational offerings.
- Relevancy of content. Does it generate understanding of the issues, alternatives, and consequences?
- Appropriateness of methods and approaches for adult participants.
- Sequencing. Does it fit with the Issue Evolution method?
- Education, not advocacy.
- Appropriate role expectations for the Extension educator.

**OBJECTIVE 11: Review appropriate public education methods and public policy education guidelines. (20 minutes)**

The following is a lecture for you to use as you review the Module. The transparencies to display the key ideas of your lecture are in the Instructional Aids (Transparencies 10 through 18).

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## "The Illustrated Talk"

ByArdis A. Young

### Considerations in Planning a Public Policy Education Program

Throughout this Module you have been given information regarding effective public policy education programs. Now you are challenged to design such a program for your county or state—to address concerns and issues that are, by their very nature, complex and controversial. That takes some skill. You also are asked to use effective adult education methods and incorporate them into your plan. Let us take a few minutes to review the important considerations you must make to do a good job of planning.

*[Display Transparency 10.]*

Think again of the definition of public policy education, which has three components:

1. Clients may need *information*—information about existing policy, or assistance in analyzing alternatives and consequences of possible action.

2. Many Extension clients want *training in the political process.* How do policy decisions get made? What legal processes are available? How can clients participate effectively in public policy formation?

3. *Leadership training* that leads to involvement in public decisions is a third possibility. Unless clients have the skill and feel confident about participating, they will not do it! Leadership training also can result in confident, competent clients who can assist Extension educators in delivering public policy education programs.

*[Display Transparency 11.]*

Determine whether you will start a new Extension program or integrate public policy education components into a project in which you are already involved. Perhaps you did that as part of your preworkshop assignment.

Consider these five criteria for choosing your program's focus:

1. *Is the topic or concern of PUBLIC interest?* As educators, we often work with producers, families, or individuals on problems they are trying to solve to improve their lives. These problems may apply only to their special situations—their private interests. For a topic to justify a public policy education effort, it has to be of concern to a large number of people, with the potential for being resolved through policy. For example, assisting a producer in developing a market plan that will increase his or her profit is probably not a public concern. When a whole community of producers is in need because existing philosophies or regulations are holding back their profits, this becomes a public concern that might provide an opportunity for public policy education programming.

*continued*

2. *Is it controversial?* In public policy education, we focus on issues to help people make good decisions about the policies that govern them. Issues are controversial. Opinions differ on how to take action, and how to get resources to finance the action. If there is no controversy, you do not have an issue.

The real issues or controversies lie in the questions: "What is the best plan for changing this circumstance or situation?" and "Who pays?" If these decisions are not controversial, perhaps you should pick another focus for a public policy education program because the problem is already resolved, or very near to it.

3. *What is your information base?* One need not be an expert on the issue to educate about it. But, it is important to know what information exists and whether or not it is accessible. Some issues are so completely determined by people's values—abortion is an example—that science has little to contribute to their resolution.

4. *Are you really interested in the issue?* Public policy education topics require persistence, often over long periods of time. Before becoming involved, you, as the Extension educator, have to make a commitment to see it through. A secondary analysis of why you are interested also is important. If your biases outweigh your objectivity as an Extension educator, better reconsider!

5. *Is the timing right?* In earlier sections of this Module, you learned that beginning a public policy education effort on a certain topic too soon—before it has become a public concern—may only frustrate those involved. Who cares—yet? Coming in too late is also ineffective. Polarization may have occurred or the concern, as in the malnutrition example used earlier, may already be on its way to resolution. As you discovered after the "Headlines" simulation, determining the "teachable moments" or best intervention times is a skill that can be developed as you involve yourself in public policy education. Keeping in touch with community leaders, media reports, and national trends will help you decide which issues to explore, and when.

*[Display Transparency 12.]*

Then, reevaluate the program direction you plan to take. Keeping in mind the differences between public policy education, advocacy, and organizational maintenance, check to see that you are following the public policy education "path," without exception! This precaution is vital to one's credibility as a public policy educator in Extension.

*[Display Transparency 13.]*

What role(s) will you play?

- Information provider/analyst?
- Educational program developer?

*continued*

- Adviser?
- Process trainer?
- Forecaster?

*[Display Transparency 14.]*

Let us review again the approaches that will help you deal with the controversies that inevitably arise as you address important issues. To manage controversy, it helps to:

1. *Time programs* so they take place before "sides" are polarized.

2. *Touch base* with leaders on various sides of the issue before beginning your program.

3. *Know your own biases* and work at being objective.

4. *Include resource people* who analyze objectively, and can balance the program by representing all views.

5. *Use the alternatives-consequences approach,* as it allows participants to choose options according to their own beliefs and values.

6. *Collaborate,* when possible, with other educators. The more people you can involve who have objective approaches and educational intentions, the more credible your program will be—and your risk will be lessened.

7. *Know the audience* for whom each activity is planned. Knowing them automatically prepares you to expect certain types of behavior. The old truism, "forewarned is forearmed," applies here.

8. *Plan agendas or lessons carefully* to lend control and a no-nonsense feeling to meetings that might otherwise offer opportunities for blowups or heated exchanges.

9. *If your group process skills are weak, get a skilled partner to help* plan and conduct public policy education programs.

10. *Inform your Extension administrator* about your plans.

Controversy is not to be feared. It can be managed so that it generates new ideas and coalitions. Those are the components needed to resolve difficult public issues.

*[Display Transparency 15.]*

Then, remember you are planning an educational *program,* not just a single event or series of unrelated events. A program differs from individual events and activities because it is designed to provide continuity, to offer different kinds of learning opportunities to different types of audiences. A program approach also ensures that good educational practices are incorporated,

*continued*

going from needs assessment, to evaluation, and back around the "learning loop."

*[Display Transparency 16.]*

Regarding reliability and credibility, make sure you have access to appropriate information, research, and resource people. Assess who and what is available before planning each educational activity. Extension *must* present reliable information, in an unbiased way. As the outreach arm of the land-grant system, this is Extension's mandate.

Now, for the actual designing of your program:

1. Review effecitve educational program procedures to refresh your memory.

2. Use a variety of methods and strategies, matching them to the needs of the audience.

3. Review **Module 2, The Extension Education Process**, for other principles and ideas in designing your plan.

*[Display Transparency 17.]*

Most important, remember the reason you are doing this: "If the democratic process is to function, citizens must be well-informed and have the opportunity to participate in policy decisions."

*[Display Transparency 18.]*

Leave Transparency 18 on the overhead projector while you briefly review the Evaluation Exercise instructions with the learners.

## Evaluation Exercise for Module 6

In the preactivity assignment, you identified an issue in your community or state that has important public policy implications. At the end of each unit, you have completed evaluating exercises in applying what you have learned to that issue. Now, it is time to exploit all of this work.

Review and summarize your evaluation exercises on paper. This summary will provide the background for the educational activities you will propose for your issue. Your assignment now is to present the design of your public policy education program, using any models, methods, or design guides (or combinations of them) in a 15-minute presentation to your Extension administrator. You have the option of sending your administrator information prior to the presentation. Such information may be background or a copy of your presentation.

In completing this assignment, make the following assumptions:

1. Your Extension administrator, who will listen to your presentation, will read up to 10 double-spaced pages. Your presentation can take a different form from the information you forward before your meeting.

2. That you will ask your administrator's advice as to whether or not you should proceed with a public policy education program. Try to anticipate any questions that may arise.

3. You will present a *design* (implying that you will need to go beyond methods) for one or more educational events, but the design will be contingent on resources available, administrative support, and other factors; i.e., you are going to present your administrator with alternative designs and your judgment about the consequences of each.

*An alternate way of completing this exercise.* If presenting this information to your Extension administrator does not appeal to you, assume instead that the written document is a grant proposal, and that the presentation will be made to a grants committee.

**OBJECTIVE 12: Complete "Evaluation Exercise: Unit V" and the "Final Evaluation of Module 6." (40 minutes)**

Ask the participants first to complete the Evaluation Exercise: Unit V (in Learners' Packet). Then ask them to use the situations they analyzed in earlier units to complete the Final Evaluation of Module 6 (in Learners' Packet). If possible, review the evaluations individually or through group discussion at the end of the workshop.

## Concluding Remarks

Summarize what has been learned in Unit V, and the possible application of this new information.

## Optional Activities

**OBJECTIVE 13: Apply the Issue Evolution–Educational Intervention method. (30–45 minutes)**

If time permits practice in applying the model, divide the learners into groups of four to eight. Assign each group an issue; let them fabricate the details. Tell each group to identify a specific stage its issue has reached, and to develop a public policy education program for this issue. Ask for group reports.

**OBJECTIVE 14: Review and discuss the Iowa Method for planning public affairs programs. (10–20 minutes)**

Refer to the discussion of the Iowa Method in Unit V of the Sourcebook. Review the method as a "comprehensive" method of public policy education, and discuss its features, advantages, and limitations with the learners.

**OBJECTIVE 15: Gain expanded awareness of the evolving nature of public policy decisions. (2 hours)**

If time allows, and you have not yet completed "Tier 2" of the simulation, do so now.

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**Working With Our Publics**

Module 6: Education for Public Decisions

# Learners' Packet

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## Introduction

Welcome to the Learners' Packet for **Module 6: Education for Public Decisions**. This in-service education module is for Extension agents and specialists who want to learn how to design, conduct, and function in effective public policy education, and for Extension administrators who need to understand how public policy education relates to their efforts to maintain the Cooperative Extension System as a dynamic organization.

For effective study of the Module, you are strongly encouraged to rely on the Sourcebook and this Learners' Packet. The materials in the Packet follow the same progression as the Sourcebook, but include additional readings, quick-reference Fact Sheets, and Evaluation Exercises for you to complete as you progress through the Module.

In selecting materials for study in **Education for Public Decisions**, our objectives have been to select the best existing readings on public policy education; create new ones to fill the gaps; and organize all of them into a module of easily used teaching materials. Many of this nation's leading public policy educators have freely contributed their best "lessons" for our use. This Module also will be your best reference for planning public policy education programs, and as a source of fresh ideas and practical methods. If you keep this notebook handy, you can add your own material and other new papers and exercises as they are developed.

Begin with your Sourcebook and use the Learners' Packet and the Selected Readings to complement it. What you are about to study here is important to your success and to the Cooperative Extension System. Best wishes in your study!

## A Guide for Self-Study of Education for Public Decisions

**Education for Public Decisions** can be used as a self-study program as well as a formal workshop. If you choose to follow the former course, here are some suggestions to make your study profitable.

1. Begin with the beginning. Read the Sourcebook, beginning with Unit I and following the text in the order it is written.

2. Read the materials appropriate to each unit, which are included in the Learners' Packet, right after you read the unit.

3. Attempt to read or view the supplementary materials that follow.

**Unit I:** *View* videotape, "Educating for Public Decisions." *Read* Siebert, J., "Administrative Considerations Regarding Public Policy Education" (in Learners' Packet).

**Unit II:** *Read* Hahn, A., "Stages of Decisionmaking," and Flinchbaugh, B. L., "Who Makes Public Decisions? Who Sets Policy?" (both in Selected Readings).

**Unit III:** *View* videotape, "Two Worms: The Importance of Facts, Myths, and Values in Public Policy" (see also Selected Readings).

**Unit IV:** *View* videotape, "Public Policy Education in Extension."

**Unit V:** *View* videotapes:
"Issue Evolution–Educational Intervention"
"SHAPES, Egan Style"
"California's Group Decision Process"
"How to Do Public Policy Education"
"Alternatives and Consequences in Extension Home Economics"

# Unit I: Introduction to Public Policy Education

## Evaluation Exercise to Begin Unit I

### Public Decisions Come out of Public Controversy

We Extension agents and specialists sometimes find our programs dealing with controversial subjects. We do not always expect it and, when controversy is a surprise, we usually do not like it. Controversy is even more likely when the topic involves a public decision. The objective of this exercise is to identify why controversy occurs in Extension programs.

1. Write a one-sentence description of a controversy that you either had or might have to deal with in your Extension education program. Choose one that involved a public decision.

2. List three ways that you did or would handle this controversy. There are no wrong answers.

   a.

   b.

   c.

3. Is this the issue you will analyze throughout this workshop? If not, select an issue that you can use as a case. Write a short (1–3) page description of the situation and what created it.

**SAVE THIS INFORMATION**

# Administrative Considerations Regarding Public Policy Education

By **Jerome B. Siebert**

Public policy education is becoming a greater concern and assuming more importance in Cooperative Extension programs, because more issues facing citizens today are being decided in the public policy arena. But public policy in terms of both research and education often is misunderstood by Cooperative Extension administrators. Two aspects of public policy that an Extension administrator deals with are (1) public policy education as part of the overall Cooperative Extension program and (2) land-grant institution programs themselves as public policy issues.

Public policy issues always will involve some degree of controversy or conflict. To most administrators, the avoidance of risk is an important goal. However, by the very nature of its programs and the interests of its expanding clientele groups, Cooperative Extension is being forced more and more to become an "actor" in the public policy arena. The challenge is how to minimize risk in public policy programs by making sure that the controversies and conflicts surrounding a particular policy issue are objectively addressed and channeled into a positive educational approach.

## Appropriate Issues

What are appropriate issues for public policy education in the Cooperative Extension program? The needs of various clientele groups relating to the public policy arena must be identified, and administrators must establish a framework for discussion and negotiation among Extension specialists, agents and administrators to determine which issues will be addressed. Extension education programs are not designed to make policy. They are designed, rather, to enable decisionmakers to draft their own policies on a more informed basis. So, deciding appropriate issues for public policy education involves the question of perceived needs and whether or not Cooperative Extension can do anything constructive for participants involved in an issue. Specifically, Cooperative Extension relies upon the available research/ knowledge base in the land-grant institution system to provide clientele and decisionmakers with sufficient information to help them make informed decisions. In some cases, this knowledge base may exist. In other cases, the knowledge base must be created to develop a well-constructed public policy education program.

As the investment of public dollars is being challenged and evaluated in all areas of government spending, the viability of land-grant institution programs is, in fact, becoming a public policy issue. Extension administrators must undertake education programs with clientele groups and government decisionmakers to assure them that their investment in agricultural research and Cooperative Extension programs is providing justifiable and competitive dividends.

Sometimes, new research results generated in land-grant institution programs become public policy issues, especially in the area of biotechnology developments. For example, in California, an agricultural scientist made a breakthrough in terms of modifying bacteria for frost protection. While this development itself would not seem controversial, it became the basis of concern for a number of local community groups, as well as groups concerned with public health and safety. The land-grant institution that fostered this research found itself involved in the public policy arena, through educating public officials on the importance of field testing the experiments. There is a growing need for Cooperative Extension to use a multidisciplinary approach in explaining to the public, concerned clientele, public-interest groups, and public officials the risks, benefits, safeguards, and consequences of pursuing particular research.

## Organization

Once Extension administrators decide to engage in public policy education, the question becomes, "How are resources, faculty, and programs to be organized effectively to carry out appropriate public policy programs?"

### Needs Identification

The first organizational step is to develop a relevant needs identification system within Extension to identify public policy issues. Advisory groups, feedback from staff, and frequent contact with clientele groups and policy decisionmakers provide the mechanisms. Since public policy education must be relevant not only to federal and statewide matters, but also to local matters, County Extension staff can be the link to the pulse of local clientele groups. With training in the process of public policy education, County Extension staff involvement in public policy programming can be highly valuable in terms of identifying and evaluating public policy needs at the local level.

### Knowledge/Research Base

Once needs are identified, it is important to relate them to the relevant knowledge or research base without which an objective public policy education program cannot take place. One impediment to appropriate analysis of public policy issues relates to accessible data bases. In this context, Cooperative Extension can work with other public agencies, as well as research counterparts, to identify public data bases. Many of these data bases may be in existence, and can be useful, with modifications. Some issues may require the creation of new data bases to address a particular problem.

The question of the optimum applied research-education balance always arises. It is imperative that the appropriate knowledge research base be available for the critical analysis necessary to assist others in evaluating the consequences of alternatives surrounding a particular public policy issue. It is important that state experiment station directors and state Extension directors be united in terms of the land-grant institution goals. When greater collaboration is fostered and supported between research and Extension, the entire continuum is involved in coordinating research, interpretation and adaptation, and educational efforts. Following this research-education continuum is in the best interests of clientele groups, public policymakers, and the land-grant institution.

### Key Participants

Due to the complex nature of public policy issues, leadership and coordination of efforts play a key role in the effectiveness of public policy education programs. Within Extension, leadership responsibility usually falls on the Public Policy Education Specialist. While this is appropriate, the role must be expanded to include the Experiment Station Director and Extension Director, appropriate department chairs, other Cooperative Extension specialists, and faculty who form the core of a multdisciplinary approach. Members of these multi-dimensional teams need not only subject-matter expertise, but process skills as well. At the local level, training for county agents in the policy education process is crucial to avoiding advocacy positions with local groups, as well as knowing what support can be obtained through Extension specialists and the land-grant institution.

## Resources

In expanding Cooperative Extension's role in the public policy education arena, the question arises, "Where do resources come from?" Reallocation is only a partial solution. Another source is new monies. A given public policy issue may command the attention of legislators willing to appropriate new monies. Another source of monies can be grants, together with private-sector involvement. Since applied research, as well as publications, training programs, educational videotape modules, and so on, provide much of the program base, the use of grants and donations from both the public and private sectors may be an appropriate route.

Experiment station directors and Extension directors must be able to draw upon a number of means to provide flexibility in addressing public policy issues. It must be possible to bring together teams of Extension specialists to address a particular issue and to assist in outlining procedures and in evaluating the consequences of the viable alternatives. Where public policy was once the domain of the agricultural economist and the political economist, the questions that now arise cross over into many other disciplines. This multidisciplinary approach requires an increased budget, so that appropriate research can be conducted and educational programs can be carried out. Travel for Extension team members to formulate and execute both applied research and educational approaches is one example of increased expenditure that must be funded.

## The Administration's Role

The role of Extension administration, in terms of public policy education, is fourfold. First, Extension administration can establish the necessary procedures whereby assessment is facilitated in the public policy arena. Extension administration can assist their staff members in *identifying priorities*. Further, the administration can establish the necessary *support* for needs assessments to be translated into priorities for Extension staff to begin developing programs.

Second, if structural changes in programs are required to carry out an appropriate Extension education program, administration can facilitate this process. Staff members can identify needed structural changes, but legitimization by administration is often necessary to implement the structural changes. In particular, as public policy education increasingly involves many disciplines, Extension administration can *motivate* and *facilitate* the formation of public policy issue teams, including liaisons and partnerships with appropriate agencies, organizations, and campus-based colleagues.

Third, the *budget* required is paramount for public policy education. While the participants in the public policy education process can go out and actively solicit grants to support programs, Extension administrators must establish the necessary policies to enable a particular program to reach fruition. In addition, Extension administrators can redirect resources into a given policy arena, as well as push public policy education as a priority issue within land-grant institutions.

Finally, Extension administrators can serve as active participants in public policy education programs, thereby lending *credibility* to the public policy education process, and enhancing the image of the program in the eyes of Extension staff and clientele groups.

## Participants

"Who are the appropriate participants in the public policy education process, and who should the programs be reaching?" Extension has dealt with public policy issues concerning its traditional clientele since its formation in 1914. Today, traditional public policy education continues to relate to farm groups and allied organizations. However, the public policy agenda is greatly expanding. Environmental groups, consumer groups, and farm labor, to name a few, also are becoming participants in the public policy process. Legislators themselves are turning to Extension and the entire land-grant system as resource bases for guidance on public policy decisions.

Extension administrators and involved Extension specialists need to keep in mind that participants in public policy issues will be more diverse in their interests and opinions than the traditional Extension program participants. This broader audience requires new strategies for facilitating the exchange of information. Some may view this broadening of audience as a threat. However, it should be treated as an opportunity for Extension to reach a broader segment of society that can benefit from its programs.

Two aspects are important in dealing with groups and organizations related to a particular public policy issue. First, existing groups need to be canvassed and identified as relevant to a particular public policy issue. Contacts and liaisons with established groups help identify their needs and their appropriate relationship to the overall educational program. However, as issues become more complex, new groups, institutions, or coalitions may be formed to address a particular issue. The land-grant institutions can facilitate the formation of new groups and coalitions, as well as the exchange of information among and between groups. Since the land-grant institution is looked upon as a source of objective and unbiased information, its educational effort may provide a forum for coalescing diverse interests into a focal point for the eventual resolution of an issue.

Another question is, "What is the role of the general public in public policy education?" It is important to assess the knowledge base of the general public, and the degree of concern that the public has about a particular issue. The public's attitudes and degree of concern about a particular issue will influence the priorities attached to the issue, as well as the timing of a particular public policy program.

## Goals

The final public policy program concern is, "What are the expected outcomes?"—a question that is paramount in every Extension administrator's mind. The first priority is that, whatever the consensus reached on any public policy issue, it must be based on informed decisions. Land-grant institutions, through Extension programs, are in a unique position to bring research and knowledge to bear on particular problems. Traditionally, Extension has built its reputation on objectivity and the ability to facilitate informed decisions. This parameter forms the keystone around which to build public policy programs.

Another concern is for the outcome to accomplish societal goals. Whether the goal is economic, environmental, sociological, cultural, or a combination of these, a measure of the worth of a particular educational program will be the attainment of some goal that benefits society. The accomplishment of group goals within society, as a whole, also is important. Obviously, many groups get involved in public policy issues to further their own goals and interests. It is important for all participants in the process to recognize that the public policy arena is one in which compromise takes place. It is to be hoped that an effective public policy education program can help divergent groups achieve at least some of their individual goals in the public policy arena.

Another outcome can be the resolution of conflicts between the goals of private and public interests, a challenge often difficult to attain. However, with thorough research and careful analysis of the consequences of particular alternatives, an Extension public policy education program may provide the basis for private and public policy decisionmakers to reconcile their differences.

Finally, applying appropriate research and education programs related to public policy issues, and treating research and Extension programs themselves as public policy issues, may improve understanding and support for land-grant institution programs. Such an outcome should not be an explicit goal. Rather, it should be a consequence of better service and better public understanding of the role of the land-grant insitution. As the land-grant institution and, in particular, Cooperative Extension address these issues and help achieve successful resolutions, the public tax dollar support for programs will not erode and may, in fact, increase. Thus, it is imperative that Extension administrators understand the role of public policy education as a tool for solving clientele and societal problems.

[*Note:* Additional recommended readings are the "Public Policy Education" pamphlet and the ECOP pamphlet, "Public Policy Education in Extension Home Economics," both in the Instructional Aids.]

## Fact Sheet
## How Influence Is Exercised in Public Policy Decisionmaking

Newcomers to the political process find it easier to develop practical strategies, if they have a detailed picture of what influence is and how it is exercised. An understanding of how influence is exercised begins with three items:

- An inventory of the *participants* involved, or likely to become involved in a decisionmaking process;
- Knowledge of their *interests;* and
- Awareness of the *political resources* the participants possess or control.

### Participants

Each decisionmaking process attracts its own array of participants, including one or more *authorities* and a variety of *partisans* who try to influence the authorities' decisions. Categories of possible participants who may be involved in public policy issues at the local level include:

- Local elected officials
- Local administrative personnel
- Political parties
- Legislative or administrative personnel from federal or state governments
- Private-sector influentials
- Absentee-owned businesses
- The electorate
- Courts
- Other local governments
- News media
- Nonprofit and proprietary agencies
- State, national, and regional affiliates of local groups
- Interest groups
- Social movement organizations.

[*Note:* Hahn defines social movement organizations as ''emerging groups'' (see Selected Readings). He distinguishes them from interest groups on the basis of their members' lack of previous political experience, recognition, and limited resources. If such organizations become established, over time, they are categorized as interest groups.]

Most issues of any significance attract representatives from a number of different categories. Communities vary in how widespread participation in local issues tends to be. Local governments may have broad or narrow scopes, and local officials may be passive or active. The local business community may be "public spirited" or narrowly concerned with the private affairs of its own firms. *The main point is, it makes a difference who gets involved.*

### Interests and Resources

Participants bring different interests to the decisionmaking process, as well as different types and amounts of political resources to use in promoting their favored outcomes.

*Interests.* Interest can be defined as anything a participant considers important to acquire, protect, avoid, or prevent. Those that need to be identified are participants' "subjective" interests—that is, their interests as they themselves see and understand them.

*Resources.* Resources can be defined as anything that a participant possesses or controls that can be used to influence other participants. Typical resources include official position, information, ideas, time and energy, prestige, respectability and popularity, money, strategically placed allies and friends, numbers, legal rights, and strategic, tactical, and organizational skills. Whether the resources will work to achieve the desired ends depends on whether or not the target of influence in a specific situation values them.

### Questions for Would-Be Influencers

Understanding how influence is exercised has a number of practical implications for educators who wish to help affect the outcomes of local issues. The most important can be summarized in a list of questions for would-be influencers.

- What are our objectives, and what specific decisions must be made to accomplish them?
- What authorities are responsible for each of these decisions? Whose support will be necessary? Whose opposition can be costly?
- What are the interests of each *authority, potential supporter,* and *potential opponent?*
- Given their interests, is it possible to obtain approval of our position through finding areas of agreement?
- If not, can credible threats or promises be made that will induce them to approve our position?
- Do we possess or control enough of the "right" resources to make sufficiently credible threats, or promises? If not, can we acquire them?
- If we cannot obtain approval of our position without making concessions, how much are we willing to give up?

—Prepared by Mary Ellen Wolf;
adapted from material by Alan Hahn

## Evaluation: Unit I

As you consider the definitions and ideas presented in Unit I, write answers to the following questions.

1. Now that you have been introduced to public policy education, is your topic a public issue, or is it likely to become one? If not, choose another and continue.

2. Would your topic be easier or harder to educate about if it were a private issue? Why?

3. Is your issue "teachable" now? When is it likely to be teachable? Describe the factors that will determine when it is teachable. How will you know when a "teachable moment" has arrived?

4. Whom will you teach? Take inventory. (Think back to the Political Inventory Exercise (PIE); refer to the Fact Sheet: "How Influence Is Exercised in Public Policy Decisionmaking.")

   a. Who will be affected?

   b. Who are those most likely to be involved?

   c. What is likely to be the locus of decisionmaking?

**SAVE THIS INFORMATION**

## Unit II. Models of Policymaking: How Public Policy Is Made in America

By now, you probably have discovered that public policymaking is difficult to describe. The process is obscure, at best, and, at its worst, seems underhanded. This is politics! Politics is a pejorative term to many people. One does not have to appreciate politics—perhaps it is better to be critical or at least wary of it, but one *does* have to understand it to teach public policy education.

How can we make public policymaking easier to understand? One way is to break the system into parts small enough to study. We bite off a piece small enough to chew; then, we bite off another piece, and another and another, until we can understand the whole. The other way is to cut out the details. We look only at the structure, or the main activity, to see how the system operates; then, we try to add details.

One modern word, modeling, describes these methods of gaining analytical power. *Policymaking models* are simplified descriptions of complex, real-world events. They highlight significant features of political life, and thereby clarify events that might otherwise be obscure or confusing.

Models give us understanding that increases our effectiveness. There are more policymaking models than are useful to present here; and no single model is superior. Each of the four models taught in this Module gives us a different way to describe how public policy is made. Given this variety of models, you should be able to find one that seems to describe your circumstances.

In Unit II of the Sourcebook, we surveyed the four types of policymaking models. One of the models, Kings and Kingmakers, is described on a videotape. The other models are Ogden's Power Cluster Model; the one we refer to as the "Branch Model," or Incrementalism; and the social process model. Each of the models is further described and compared in this Learners' Packet.

Any one of these models can give you increased analytical power, as well as improved ability to understand and communicate about the public policy situation.

"Why learn how public policy is made?" you might ask. The reason this knowledge is useful is that, before we can educate people about some issue, we have to know who needs to be educated about what, and whether or not the time is right. We also need to anticipate resource needs and give ourselves some time to choose a suitable method. Understanding how public policy is made can give us precious lead time, as well as help us evaluate when not to attempt public policy education.

### Preactivity Readings for Unit II

Read Unit II of the Sourcebook.

Scan the Fact Sheets in this Unit.

### Before Proceeding to Unit III

Complete the Evaluation Exercise for Unit II.

For self-study and further study, the following papers in the Selected Readings are highly recommended:

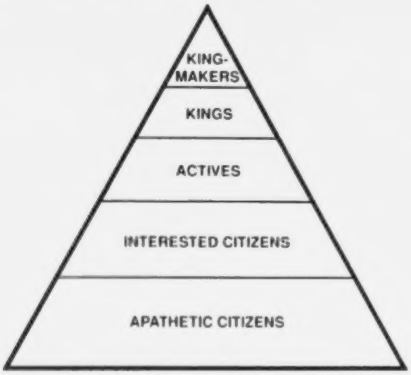
Hahn, A., "Stages of Decisionmaking."

Flinchbaugh, B. L., "Who Makes Public Decisions? Who Sets Policy?"

## Fact Sheet

## Kings and Kingmakers (An Elite Model of Public Policymaking)

Barry L. Flinchbaugh, Extension Specialist at Kansas State University, developed the "Kings and Kingmakers" model of public policymaking in which he depicts that power and policy are organized in every community (or state, or the U.S.) in a pyramid, as illustrated in the schematic of the model.



### Summary Description

The *Kingmakers* occupy the top level of the public policymaking hierarchy. They have the financial and intellectual resources to influence and even determine public policy. Their power is often "invisible" to the public. Nevertheless, from their position behind the scenes, they may determine who gets elected, which items appear on the public policy agenda, and which die a sudden death.

The *Kings,* or clearly visible policymakers, are next in the hierarchy. Kings are the elected and appointed leaders in government and organizations, and have a strong and direct interest in public policy. The Kings are elected or appointed, with the blessing of the Kingmakers, and work in close consultation with them.

The *Actives* are the "joiners," or civic-minded members of a community, state, or nation, who occupy the position in the hierarchy immediately below the Kings. These are the active members and leaders in service clubs, special-interest groups, and national organizations, like the League of Women Voters and the National Farmers Union.

Below the Actives are the *Interested Citizens,* who are fairly well informed on community, state, and national issues. But, unlike the Actives, the Interested Citizens are neither vocal nor frequent participants in the policymaking process.

The *Apathetic Citizens* are the largest group (at the bottom level of the hierarchy). According to Flinchbaugh (Selected Readings), this level represents the "don't-give-a-damn bunch." Only under unusual circumstances does a public issue arise that arouses their interest or provokes them to become more active and involved.

## Focus of the Kings and Kingmakers Model

According to the Kings and Kingmakers model, the public policy agenda is set by the Kingmakers and determined by the Kings and Actives. Public policy education, Flinchbaugh argues, will be most successful when targeted toward the Kings, who will, in turn, impart the educational message to the Kingmakers (above) and the Active Citizens (below).

The focus of the Kings and Kingmakers model is on a select few in society to understand and explain how public policy is made. It is primarily concerned with *who has power* to make decisions and shape policy. As with other elite models, it does not show that all policy will be against the masses or contrary to public opinion, but that responsibility for the general welfare rests with a few influentials in the community. Mass opinion is influenced by the powerful elites; communication flows downward; and the masses thus have only an indirect influence on public policy.

—Prepared by Mary Ellen Wolf;
adapted from Flinchbaugh

## Fact Sheet

# Two Models of Public Policy Decisionmaking: Lindblom's "Muddling Through" versus the Rational-Comprehensive Model

Almost three decades ago, economist Charles E. Lindblom developed one of the most enduring models of public decisionmaking. Lindblom's incremental model was a reaction to the elaborate "rational-comprehensive" models in vogue at that time. Today, although times have changed, these two models are still accepted and used by policy analysts, public officials, and citizens alike. They have remained useful because they offer clear, although contrasting, conceptions of how public decisions actually are made. The characteristics of each are summarized.

### Rational-Comprehensive Model

In the rational-comprehensive model, it is suggested that policy ought to be made, and even *is* made, as policymakers work systematically through the following:

- A consideration and clarification of values and objectives in a process that is distinct and separate from the analysis of alternative policies;
- Formulation of policies by isolating the ends, and then objectively seeking the means to achieve them;
- Determination of a "good" policy, by using the evidence gathered to demonstrate that it is the most appropriate means to achieve desired ends;
- Engaging in comprehensive policy analysis that takes every important and relevant factor into account; and
- Relying on theory, whenever possible.

In this model, it is further suggested that public policy starts from new fundamentals each time an issue arises. The implication is that decisionmaking can be accomplished fresh, from clean and "untouched" public policy "soil," each time a policy issue comes under consideration.

### "Muddling Through" Model (Incrementalism)

In his challenge to the rational-comprehensive model, Lindblom describes a decisionmaking system of *successive limited comparisons.* In direct contrast to the "root" method of the rational-comprehensive perspective, in the incremental model, Lindblom says that decisions are made by the "branch" method, by continually building from the current policy and decisionmaking situation, step by step and in small degrees. According to Lindblom, in the complex world of public policy, decisionmaking is characterized by the following:

- Valued policy goals are selected in a process that proceeds along with the analysis of impacts and consequences; that is, values and objectives are *not* determined separately from analysis.

- The decisionmaker considers only some of all possible policy alternatives, and these differ only marginally from existing policy.
- For each policy alternative, only a limited number of important consequences are evaluated.
- The problems facing policymakers are continually changing and being redefined; therefore, policy analysis is always limited and often important outcomes, alternatives, and values are neglected.
- The test of a ''good'' policy is agreement—when policymakers find themselves agreeing on a policy, it becomes the most appropriate means to select.
- Incremental policymaking is essentially remedial and geared to treat immediate, concrete social needs rather than to promote future social goals.

Lindblom indicates in the model that many participants seek mutual consent as they go about solving public problems. But, because uncertainty characterizes the entire process, the participants seek modifications of existing programs, not the ''all or nothing'' changes suggested by the rational-comprehensive model. ''Something that works'' or decisionmaking by ''muddling through'' is, according to Lindblom, the most realistic picture of how public decisions are made in the United States. It is a model of limited, feasible policymaking.

## Application and Use of These Models in Public Policy Education

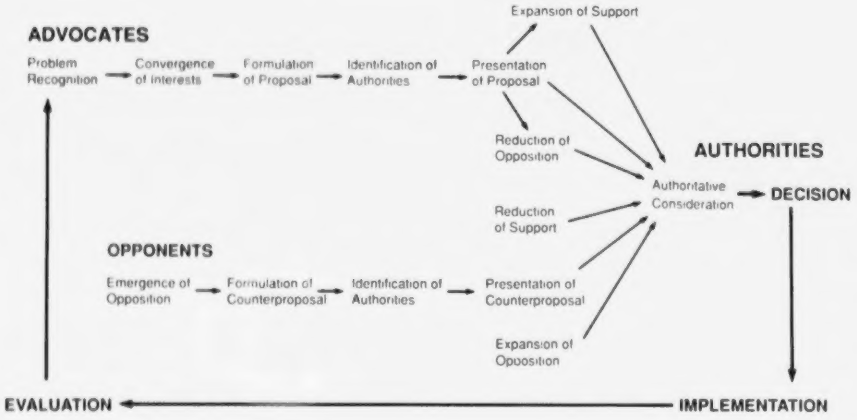
It is difficult—if not impossible—to ''fit'' an issue into the rational-comprehensive or the incremental models. The models do not lend themselves to specific, applied, issue analysis. Instead, the particular value of these two rather abstract models is to help explain how public decisions have been or will be made, for a given public problem, at a given point in time. In short, rational-comprehensive and incremental models are best used as *frameworks for understanding a decisionmaking process or situation.*

—Prepared by Mary Ellen Wolfe;
adapted from Lindblom (1959)

## Fact Sheet
## Stages of the Decisionmaking Model

Newcomers to the political arena may find the social process model called "Stages of Decisionmaking" particularly useful. Alan Hahn developed this conceptual framework to describe a regularly occurring sequence of activities that involves citizen participation in the policymaking process.

This model recognizes that public problems involve conflict between policy *advocates* and *opponents*. To resolve such a conflict, the interested advocates and opponents engage in a series of steps or activities as a preface to petitioning key authorities to adopt their preferred policy alternative. This decisionmaking model differentiates between the activities of advocates and opponents and is presented schematically and described in more detail in the sections that follow.



### Activities of the Advocates

*Problem recognition.* Advocates acknowledge a problem, new goal, or objective and initiate the decisionmaking process in an attempt to address it. The government official closest to the problem is often the first advocate to recognize it. Raising issues and moving from stage to stage through the process is more difficult for people with limited political experience and recognition.

*Convergence of interests.* The perception of a shared problem or goal brings together people who recognize that, by asserting their influence, they may obtain a desired resolution.

*Formulation of a proposal.* Interested individuals organize and plan action to address the problem or goal as they perceive it.

*Development of a strategy.* The advocates identify the decisionmaker with the authority to make the relevant decision. They then develop a plan of action to increase the likelihood that their proposal will be accepted.

*Expansion of support.* The advocates locate and solicit the support needed to persuade the key authorities to make the desired decision. (For example, they circulate petitions, advertise, hold mass meetings, and work out agreements with influential people.)

*Reduction of opposition.* Steps are undertaken to reduce the effectiveness of emerging opposition. These steps can take the form of anticipating the impact of opposition and attempting to defuse its impact in advance; face-to-face confrontation; or negotiation.

*Presentation of proposal.* The last activity the advocates engage in is to try to secure a place for their proposal on the policymaker's formal agenda. If the preceding sequence of activities has been accomplished, the groundwork for this final stage has been laid, and the chances of a successful outcome for the advocates will have been maximized.

## Activities of the Opponents

The uniqueness of this model lies in its recognition of the important role that opposition forces play in making public policy. Arising at any stage of the policymaking process, opponents follow a series of steps that parallel those of the policy advocates:

- Emergence of opposition,
- Formulation of a counterproposal,
- Identification of authorities,
- Presentation of counterproposals,
- Expansion of the opposition, and
- Presentation of the proposal.

## Final Stages in the Policymaking Process

The final stages in the policymaking process are (1) authoritative decision, (2) implementation, and (3) evaluation.

*Authoritative Decision.* Once a public issue (problem) reaches the formal agenda, the relevant government authorities deliberate and then make a final decision. Numerous outcomes are possible: the authorities can adopt the advocates' proposal, the opponents' counterproposal, or a compromise; or they can refuse to take action and thereby preserve the status quo.

*Implementation.* After the formal decision has been made, established (or newly created) government entities take action to implement the decision. A new routine may result from the decision; the development of new regulations may be mandated; and enforcement procedures may be developed.

*Evaluation.* At some point after a new policy is implemented, advocates, opponents, or other ''interested parties'' begin to consider the effects and consequences of the decision and its implementation. At such point, the final stage of the policymaking process has begun. Either through formal means such as data analysis, or through informal means such as citizen reaction, evaluating a policy reveals its success, failure, or the need for modification. If a problem is observed in a particular policy, the ''stages'' begin again.

—Prepared by Mary Ellen Wolfe;
adapted from Hahn's ''Stages of Decisionmaking''

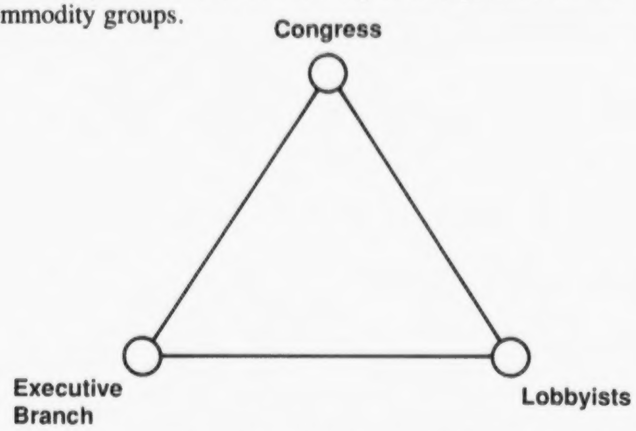
# Fact Sheet
# "Triangle and Clusters" Models of Public Policymaking

According to some observers, American public policy is the result of group interaction. Individuals have little impact on policymaking, it is argued, except as they take action through their membership groups. Furthermore, groups win success for their preferred policy alternative (and political power) on the basis of their size, political effectiveness, and wealth. Two "group" models of public policymaking are described here.

## The Iron Triangle

Several decades ago, an observer of public policy developed the metaphor of the "Iron Triangle" to describe how agricultural policy was made. According to this model, the three points of power in the agricultural policy triangle are:

- The *Executive*—the Secretary of Agriculture, administrators of the USDA agencies, and the Director of the Budget;
- The *Congress*—the chairmen of the congressional Agriculture and Appropriations committees; and
- The *Farm Lobby*—the leaders of a few key farm organizations and relatively new commodity groups.



According to this perspective, within this triangle of power, the nation's agricultural policy is debated; the legislative agenda is determined; administrative regulations are promulgated and implemented; and programs are administered. Over time, this model has proven relevant to other areas of public policymaking, such as housing, medicine, transportation, and the military.

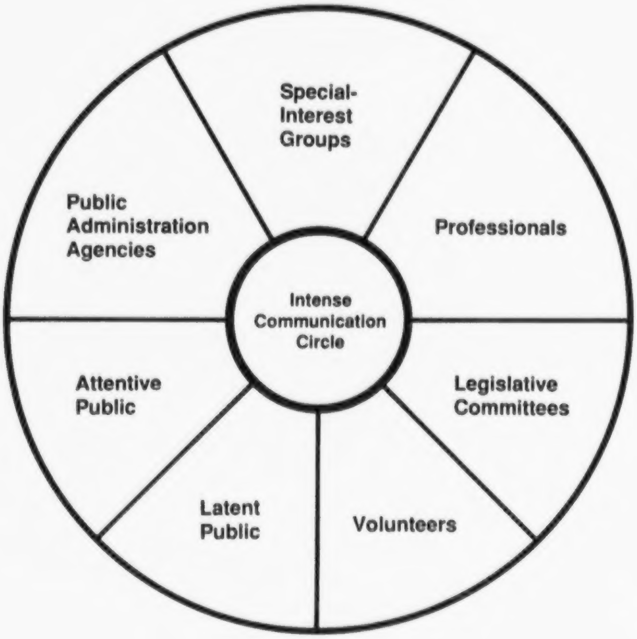
## Power Clusters

More recently, Ogden (1971) used the term "web of power" to describe the increased number of actors playing significant roles in the public policy arena. Expanding on the idea of the "Iron Triangle," Ogden formulated the *Clusters* model of policymaking to describe the multiple groups that affect policy from formulation through evaluation and revision.

Power clusters exist in every major area of public policy: agriculture, education, and defense are prominent examples. Power clusters come into being as related groups, acting independently, and joining together to influence public policy that affects their interests and concerns at the local, state, and national levels.

*Elements of a Power Cluster.* All power clusters contain the same elements:

- Administrative agencies,
- Legislative committees,
- Special-interest groups,
- Professionals,
- Attentive public, and
- Latent public.



*Behavior of Power Clusters.* Five patterns of behavior characterize the relationships within each power cluster and help shape the policymaking process.

- *Close personal and institutional ties*—key people communicate frequently.
- *Active communication among cluster elements*—intense communication characterizes the key actors in the cluster at varying points in time in the policymaking process.

- *Internal conflicts among competing interests*—although relationships within clusters are generally friendly, the various members may hold opposing views and frequently be in conflict with one another.
- *Internal cluster decisionmaking*—the majority of policy decisions are made within the various clusters.
- *Well-developed internal power structure*—within a cluster, key leaders are well-known and consulted on all major activities that affect their interests.

—Prepared by Mary Ellen Wolfe;
adapted from Ogden (1971)

## Fact Sheet
## Comparing Public Policymaking Models

Models of public policymaking are useful tools to help clarify our thinking about politics and public policy. These models also help us:

- Identify important aspects of policy problems;
- Focus on significant features of political life;
- Differentiate between important and unimportant events in the policymaking process; and
- Suggest explanations for public policy and predict its consequences.

The policy educator will find it useful to be familiar with the four models of policymaking herein, for each offers a different perspective on how public policy is made. Some educators are likely to prefer one model over another. But no one model says it all. In focusing on certain aspects of the policy process, of necessity, other aspects are omitted.

By comparing the characteristics of each model, the focus, use, and limitations of each become more apparent. The educator can use such comparisons prior to designing public policy programs to help accomplish the above, and to inform the participants about the public policy process itself.

—Prepared by Mary Ellen Wolfe

| Model | Focus | Use | Limitations |
|---|---|---|---|
| Kings and kingmakers | Who has the power? (Elites) | Describes the role of leaders; reveals hidden power-brokers who influence public policy. | May overstate the role of elites; may understate the role of groups and the multidimensional nature of policymaking; can be hard to identify the elites over time. |
| Power Clusters | Who has the power? (Groups) | Describes the central role of groups; allows for incrementalism. | May overstate the group role and understate the role of public officials and institutions; may overlook environmental factors. |
| Rational-Comprehensive | How are decisions made? (Rationally, comprehensively) | Describes a rational "scientific" decisionmaking process. | May be unrealistic; exaggerate the time, resources, and information available to the decisionmaker; may not take group or elite power into account. (Highly abstract) |
| "Muddling Through" | How are decisions made? (Incrementally) | Highlights the manner in which officials make decisions. | May overlook the role of elites, systematic stages in the process, and possibility of innovative policy changes. (Highly abstract) |
| Stages in the Decisionmaking Process | What are the regularly occurring stages in the decisionmaking process? | Describes the process or system; multiple decision points, fragmentation of power. | May overlook changes in the social, political environment; content of the process may be overlooked. Does not identify the actors. |

**Key characteristics to consider in selecting a public policymaking model**

## Evaluation: Unit II

Now that you have been introduced to a variety of models that describe how public policy is made, how well can you apply them to your issue?

1. Which model best describes how decisions and policy are made in your community or state? Why?

2. Do you prefer one model for describing the public policymaking process in your area? Why? What characteristics of this model attract you?

3. If you were teaching about how public policy or decisions were made in your community or state, would you use only one model? Justify your answer.

4. Describe how a policy or a decision was made in your state or community that illustrates one of the models you have just learned.

5. Which policymaking models would be most useful to you in describing and analyzing controversy (issue) in the topic you have chosen?

**SAVE THIS INFORMATION**

# Unit III. Facts, Myths, Values, Ethics, and Advocacy

## Fact Sheet
## Facts, Myths, Values, Ethics and Advocacy

In "Two Worms—The Importance of Facts, Myths, and Values in Public Policy," Flinchbaugh defines public policy as "an identifiable course of action hammered out in the political arena to maximize the satisfaction of relevant interest groups in society and to improve the general welfare.... Public policy issues are public problems stated in terms of symptoms."

What are the characteristics of public policy issues?

1. *Require a group decision.* We are not talking about individual problems. We are dealing with group problems that require a group decision.

2. *Solutions are based on value judgments.* If we can settle the problem through scientific analysis, if we can come up with the answer in the laboratory, it is not a public problem. Public problems involve value judgments to arrive at solutions. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers to public issues. If you can convince yourself of that, you are a long way toward beginning to discuss the problem rationally. The answer will be a compromise based on value judgments.

3. *Broad interest and concern.* Frequently, people will say, when they are together in a group discussing public issues, "Something ought to be done." Public issues are of wide interest and concern.

4. *Controversial.* If you are not dealing with a controversial issue, you really are not dealing with a problem that concerns the public. Policy issues are controversial, and that is why they require a unique educational methodology.

5. *Recognized by key decisionmakers as a problem.* A public issue does not exist until the key decisionmakers recognize the problem.

There is a public issue—a problem. Folks are saying something ought to be done. Some of them are saying, "There ought to be a law." So that is where we begin. This beginning may be in a local tavern, church pew, or club. About each public issue, there are some known facts as well as an abundant supply of myth. Then, each of us has his or her own values, and we assume this nation is a Jeffersonian democracy in which every one of us is welcome to his or her own set of values.

One of the things you need to remember as an Extension educator is the fact that because you have studied the issue, you have a degree behind your name, and you may be the "expert" does not make your values superior to anyone else's. There is a set of facts about each public issue. There is an abundant supply of mythology and we all have our own values. Just think of facts, myths, and values being put in a gunny sack, shaken up, and redistributed. All three come into play.

A *fact* is a verifiable statement of what is. The sales tax in Kansas is 4 percent; that is a fact. Social security is partially funded out of current tax dollars; it is not a long-term pension fund. Current workers are paying the bill for those who are drawing retirement benefits. These are all facts that can be verified.

A *myth*, in the policymaking process, is treated exactly the same as a fact, because a myth is what people *think* is fact. The real purpose of public policy education is to establish fact and destroy mythology. If we get the job done, if we establish fact and destroy mythology, we have basically completed our task as a public policy educator, because the main purpose of public policy education is to increase the body of fact, to increase public understanding, and to disprove mythology.

*Values* are what should be. Values cannot be proven right or wrong. Part of the government's responsibility is to look after old folks. That is a value judgment. It cannot be proven right or wrong.

When there is no universally accepted measuring stick, we settle issues with value judgments. We do this through two systems: compromise in a democratic society, or dictatorship.

Value judgements apply when there is not complete agreement on the measuring stick; then we have a public issue. A public issue cannot be solved through scientific analysis. It must be solved in the political arena, through debate and compromise among diverse interests that have divergent views.

—Excerpted from Flinchbaugh's "Two
Worms—The Importance of Facts,
Myths, and Values in Public Policy"

# Fact Sheet
# Pitfalls in Analyzing Public Problems

People's (and Extension educators') values and beliefs can affect our involvement in shaping public policy. They can influence which problems we view as important, and how we think a particular problem should be resolved. They also can lead us into "pitfalls" in analyzing public problems when we are unaware of the crucial role played by values and beliefs.

## Values

Values guide our thinking in terms of what we perceive to be "good" or "bad." Most of the friction in dealing with public problems stems from value conflicts. Although value conflicts will always exist, they can be minimized by "filtering" accepted values through the following principles:

1. Values are subject to change and should be constantly reassessed; e.g., attitudes about drinking and driving have changed in recent years.

2. Each individual must be open to the constructive criticisms and viewpoints of those who place a different emphasis on certain values; i.e., values cannot be "proven" right or wrong. Instead, they reflect the individual's perception of what is good or bad.

3. Values are subject to different interpretations and have a limit to their desirability. For example, "Freedom for the pike is death for the minnow."

## Beliefs

Beliefs are ideas of the way things really are. It is important to filter beliefs and "facts" through rigorous logic and analysis to minimize the risk of:

1. Confusing the symptoms of a problem with its causes;

2. Jumping to conclusions;

3. Developing general conclusions from limited or unrepresentative observations;

4. Oversimplifying the analysis;

5. Distorting conclusions beyond the factual base;

6. Assuming what is true of the pieces is also true of the whole;

7. Judging the person instead of the ideas presented; and

8. Judging the response instead of the ideas presented.

The reason for avoiding these eight pitfalls relates directly to our philosophy of government and public policy education. The essence of this philosophy is that individuals are responsible for the consequences of their choices. This responsibility implies that individuals must make well-informed choices, and the likelihood of such choices is increased every time the foregoing sources of error are avoided.

—Excerpts from Cordes' ''Values and Beliefs in Public Problem Analysis''

## Public Policy Quiz

Some of the following statements are facts, some are myths, and some are value judgments. Which are F (fact)? M (myth)? or V (value judgment)?

____ 1. If the people had all the facts about any particular problem and really understood them, their decision in regard to what ought to be done to solve it would be almost unanimous.

____ 2. Taverns should be permitted to operate on Sunday.

____ 3. We need educational programs to keep more young people in the rural area.

____ 4. Home Economics agents should be paid the same salary as agricultural agents.

____ 5. The national debt is already at the danger point and, under no circumstances, should be increased.

____ 6. In an unregulated market, prices are set by the free forces of supply and demand.

____ 7. Taxes are now too high and should be reduced.

____ 8. As the percentage of the population engaged in farming declines, a nation's material standard of living increases.

____ 9. The government already has intervened in many spheres of the economy and certainly could curtail rather than expand its activities.

____10. Extension workers could be required to take advanced academic training as a prerequisite to professional advancement.

____11. An Extension worker who has his or her own selfish interests at heart should not do educational work in controversial areas, e.g., school consolidation, at what levels farm prices should be supported, or proper eating habits.

____12. Interest rates are too high.

____13. Public policy educators should be on *tap*, not on *top*.

____14. Reaganomics is working.

____15. Our defense capability is already more than needed and, therefore, can be cut.

____16. If interest rates are to come down without a return to inflation, the federal deficit must be cut.

____17. It is none of the government's business what you and I can eat.

____18. If one has a history of cholesterol problems, scientific investigations have shown that one must monitor and control cholesterol intake.

____19. What is advantageous to one individual may be disadvantageous to another.

____20. The power structure is continually in a state of flux.

____21. The status quo is rarely preserved over the long run.

____22. Since Extension has historically served rural agriculturally oriented people, Extension public policy educators have an obligation to promote rural interests in public policy issues.

____23. Economic justice is to each the same.

____24. Economic justice is to each according to ability after meeting minimal needs.

____25. We have become a government of special interests.

____26. Public issues usually are debated in terms of the symptoms rather than the actual problem.

____27. The farm family has served Americans well and, therefore, must be preserved.

____28. We are depleting our groundwater supply; therefore, we must find another way to ration it.

____29. Extension home economists will have their motives impugned if they conduct a public policy education program on the ERA.

____30. Because of the influence of the cattle industry, it is impossible to conduct a public policy education program on nutrition in beef-producing states.

—Contributed by B. L. Flinchbaugh

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

MONTGUIDE

MT 8401

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

# SETTING GROUP GOALS

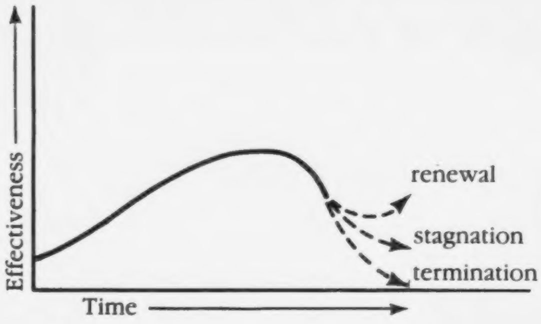
by

Dave Sharpe, Community Development Specialist

### Why Set Group Goals?

One measure of group effectiveness is how well a group accomplishes its goals. Initially, all groups were established to satisfy some common need of the members or to pursue a common cause. But, as time passes, group members frequently lose sight of their goals.

Russell Robinson contends that groups start by increasing in effectiveness until their first goals are accomplished and then decline in effectiveness unless new goals are set. Failure to periodically set new goals leads to stagnation or termination.



**Typical response when effectiveness declines is to turn inward and devote energies to clinging to what is still left, often continuing in a state of stagnation.**

Setting group goals also helps a group determine which activities to conduct. Goals are the ends group members hope to accomplish, and activities are the means to those ends. Thus a good measure of the worth of any activity is the extent to which it helps a group reach its goals. If a group is not sure of its goals, it will have difficulty deciding which activities do the group the most good.

### Procedures

Setting group goals is basically a process of generating a number of alternative concerns the group might pursue and then selecting a few top priority concerns the group feels it can address. The brainstorming, nominal group and force field analysis techniques presented here have proven successful in helping groups generate alternatives and select a few as priority goals.

### Brainstorming

One of the best known techniques for producing new ideas, insights and potential group goals is the brainstorming method developed by Osborn back in the 1930s. It has the advantages of stimulating a large number of alternatives in a brief amount of time. Further, participants are encouraged to come up with far-out ideas so creative new approaches may be suggested.

The technique has several major drawbacks. It is difficult to involve more than 10 participants. Ideas are not tested against reality. Skillful leadership is required to create an atmosphere in which the quality of opinions is not judged and in which all members feel free to participate. Group discussion is more likely to get off on a tangent than with the nominal group technique.

*Steps:*

1. A specific task is given to the group, i.e. "think of all possible goals for our group."
2. The facilitator helps warm the group up with a nonsense task, i.e., "Let's list all the ways we could improve on the design of an armadillo."

The programs of the Montana Cooperative Extension Service are available to all people regardless of race, creed, color, sex or national origin.

Issued in furtherance of cooperative extension work in agriculture and home economics; acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Carl J. Hoffman, Director, Cooperative Extension Service, Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana 59717.

3. The facilitator encourages members to think of as many ideas as possible.
4. Criticism of any ideas and statements of judgment are not permitted.
5. Piggybacking on the ideas of others is encouraged.
6. The facilitator records the ideas on newsprint, emphasizing that once the ideas are recorded they become group property and the originator has no need to feel ownership or to lobby for a particular idea.
7. Once all ideas are recorded, or at a later meeting, the group examines the list and selects the most appropriate suggestions. This may be done by group consensus or by voting.

**Nominal Group Technique**

Delbecq's nominal group technique was developed to involve all members in determining group goals. The technique is termed "nominal" because much of the work is done independently by group members. Though conducted in a group setting, a good deal of the discussion that is part of normal group meetings is avoided. Since members work individually and are not influenced by group discussion, a broad range of ideas may be suggested.

By involving all members in a highly structured exercise, the technique tends to reduce the influence of dominant individuals. No one is permitted to lobby for a particular position. Criticism of other's ideas is prohibited. Thus a safe group climate is created in which all members feel free to express themselves.

Involvement of all members in the goal setting process acts to motivate the members to accomplish the selected goals. Because everyone had a hand in determining the goals, they are more likely to work toward accomplishing them.

The technique is not a magic solution that will solve all the problems of a struggling group. High power individuals may object to a technique that reduces their influence. If significant interests are not represented at the session, the validity of the results will be questionable. The technique does not use in-depth discussion of recommendations nor careful analysis of background information. It does involve all members in generating a large number of alternatives and then reducing them to a manageable number of priorities in a minimum period of time.

*Steps:*

1. Break group down into groups of 6-10 to facilitate discussion and recording.
2. Participants write on note cards all the ideas they can think of in response to the task question. The task question needs to be carefully worded to focus thinking on the proper issue. Members work individually and silently.
3. A recorder for each group writes down all the ideas on newsprint and numbers them. This is done in a round-robin fashion, taking one idea at a time from each member until all ideas are recorded. No lobbying or criticism!
4. The group examines its list to see if any ideas can be combined.
5. Individual members vote for the ideas they feel are most important by writing the numbers of the ideas on their cards. The number of ideas each selects should be based on the total number of ideas; choose three ideas from a total of up to 15, four from a total of 15-25, five for a total greater than 25.
6. Recorders tally the number of responses for each item.
7. Results from each small group are reported back to the whole group.
8. A second round of voting on the top priorities is done by the group as a whole.
9. The total number of ideas to be acted upon depends on the number of priorities the group feels it can pursue.

**Force Field Analysis**

Groups can employ brainstorming and nominal group techniques to generate a large number of alternative goals and then reduce these to a few top priorities. But the goal setting process should not stop here. A group is wise to analyze the recommended goals to determine the probability of accomplishing them.

The University of Michigan Research Center for Group Dynamics found that groups often set overly optimistic goals. Setting unrealistically high aspirations sets the group up for failure. Nevertheless, members may believe they will derive greater satisfaction from accomplishing a difficult goal than an easy one. They also may feel less embarrassment if they fail at a difficult goal. Comparisons of goals set by individuals to the goals they set for their group indicate they were willing to take larger risks for the group than for themselves. Finally, members who have little responsibility for accomplishing the goals tended to set higher goals than those who are responsible for accomplishing the goals.

Leaders need to be aware of the tendency to set overly optimistic goals and guard against them. They should encourage members to carefully examine the probability for reaching agreed upon goals.

Force field analysis can help determine which priorities should be acted upon and the probability of successful action. Conducting this analysis early in the planning process helps avoid pursuing goals unlikely to be reached.

The procedure calls for identification of the forces that act to drive or restrain movement toward the goal. If the group decides it can influence either driving forces or restraining forces to a sufficient extent to accomplish its goal, it proceeds toward the goal. If the group feels it cannot significantly influence the forces, the goal is dropped, at least for the present.

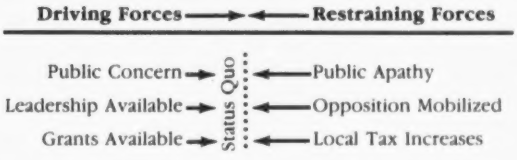
*Procedure:*

1. *Diagnosing forces that help and hinder achievement of objectives:* There are forces in every situation that cause things to remain as they are or to change. Forces that push toward change are called driving or helping forces. Forces that resist change are called restraining or hindering forces. If change is to occur, the strength of some forces must be altered so that movement can take place.

   In order to plan appropriate strategies for change, the forces in the situation must be clearly understood and identified. A "force" can be people, resources, attitudes, traditions, values, needs, desires, etc.

   Ask the group: What forces will help you achieve your objective(s) and what forces probably will hinder you from achieving your objectives(s)? List on newsprint all that come to mind without placing a value judgment on any.

**Example**



1. *Action planning (strategy design):* Change occurs when there is imbalance between the forces. An imbalance may occur through a change in the magnitude or direction of a force or through addition of a new force.

   Have the group select two or three important restraining forces and two or three important driving forces which it has some possibility of altering. State specifically what will be done to change them. Write the responses on newsprint and tape to wall.

   Restraining Force A ____________________

   What can be done to reduce the effect of this force?

   Restraining Force B ____________________

   What can be done to reduce the effect of this force.?

   Restraining Force C ____________________

   What can be done to reduce the effect of this force?

   Driving Force A____________________

   What can be done to increase the effect of this force?

   Driving Force B____________________

   What can be done to increase the effect of this force?

   Driving Force C ____________________

   What can be done to increase the effect of this force?

3. *Goal Decision:* Decide whether the effect of these actions will produce the desired change. If so, the group can realistically pursue this goal. If not, the group might better direct its efforts on other goals.

**Recommended Procedure:**

- Keep your group alive, active and effective by periodically, perhaps annually, resetting goals.
- Use brainstorming or nominal group techniques at one meeting, following up with force field analysis at the next.
- Record the decisions on newsprint and post them on the wall at each meeting to remind members of goals they have agreed upon.
- Don't attempt more goals than the group can realistically expect to achieve.
- When determining potential group activities, consider to what degree the activities will help the group reach its goals.

**References**

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Osborn, A.F. *Applied Imagination*. 3rd rev. ed., Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1963.

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Zander, Alvin. *Making Groups Effective*. Jossey-Bass Publishers. San Francisco, 1982.

## Evaluation: Unit III

1. Identify some facts and value statements about your topic.

Facts:

Value statements:

2. Are you aware of any myths about your topic and its issues? If so, list them.

3. List any values or known positions that are likely to impede communication among those affected. Check any that might cause people not to listen to an educational program. (Review Fact Sheet on "Pitfalls in Analyzing Public Problems.")

4. Will those involved perceive you and your office as objective? Yes___ No___

If yes, what can you do to maintain that perception? If no, why not? What can you do about it?

**SAVE THIS INFORMATION**

## Unit IV. Roles for Public Policy Educators

Is there only one way to educate people about public policy decisions? Learners sometimes get that idea. They may see a public policy specialist in action; think he or she is very impressive; and jump to the conclusion that his or hers is the only way to do the job. Actually, there are several ways to provide public policy education in Extension programming. Unit IV features a videotape in which several ways of conducting public policy education are illustrated. We do not all have to use the same approach. Some of us are great at arranging conferences and workshops. Some are great analysts. Some look forward to giving a speech or a lecture. This variety reflects the fact that Extension agents and specialists get involved in different situations or at different stages in the evolution of a public issue. With a variety of public policy education tools, a repertoire, the Extension educator can match an educational opportunity with appropriate methods.

Five different roles for the Extension educator in public policy education are described in Unit IV of the Sourcebook. Our favorite public policy education methods should not confine us to only one or two of these roles, or prevent us from calling in colleagues who have different skills. Moreover, if we are to teach others public policy education or assist them, we need to be open to the idea that there are several legitimate roles possible for Extension public policy educators.

The five roles of the Extension educator in public policy education are listed and briefly defined here.

1. *Forecaster.* The forecaster role involves the future. It requires anticipating emerging problems and policy issues. The forecaster role is not easy, but it is useful to try to predict important future issues. **Module 7: Techniques for Future Perspectives** provides more information about methods for looking ahead.

2. *Adviser.* People frequently ask our advice. Sometimes it is about matters that are public issues. Sometimes they ask for one thing to feel us out on another. When controversy is likely, clientele behavior is harder to interpret.

3. *Process facilitator.* Extension agents often are asked to become involved in an issue and to follow it through to resolution. Extension specialists get asked to do this, too, but they have a little more leeway because they usually do not live in the same community with the problem. One method for performing this role, California's Group Process, is included in Unit V. It demonstrates a tried-and-true method for facilitating. Facilitating a policymaking process while remaining objective about the outcome is a challenge, so it helps to have a process that one finds functional.

4. *Information provider.* In some ways, the role of information provider is the easiest. Even though facts often are disputed when controversy is present, most people in our culture respect scientific information. The information provider either develops information, helps others develop information, serves as liaison to experts, or interprets information. Information is the ''commodity'' that brings the highest ''market price.'' We do so much of our work in this role that it dominates our image. It is also easiest to communicate to clients and support groups, such as legislators.

5. *Program developer.* Program developer is one role that we all perform—more or less. Some of us are good at it; all of us should be. Planning public policy education programs requires many special considerations.

**Preactivity Readings and Assignment:**

1. Read Unit IV of the Sourcebook.

2. After viewing the videotape, ''Policy Education in Extension: Roles and Approaches,'' complete the exercise, ''Evaluation: Unit IV.''

## Evaluation: Unit IV

Please answer the following questions about roles for public policy educators.

1. Which educational role do you automatically play? Why?

2. What are the advantages of being able to use several methods and roles?

3. How can you, as a public policy educator, become more adept at all the rules presented here?

4. Which role(s) is not appropriate for your topic? What factors make the role(s) preferable to others in this situation?

**SAVE THIS INFORMATION**

## Unit V. Public Policy Education Methods

If you found that your study of public policymaking gave you increased analytical and communications capability, the reasons for following up with public policy education methods should be obvious. By now, you should be anxious to learn some techniques that will enable you "to do" public policy education. The many ways to educate about public policy decisions were illustrated in Unit IV.

The information and exercises in Unit V should help you make the transition from the public policymaking models of Unit III to practical methods of public policy education. To this end, the study of methods begins with the "issue evolution-educational intervention" model. This model has two parts: public policymaking is described under issue evolution and public policy education possibilities are analyzed under educational intervention. As implied by their names, the two parts are linked so that one can see the connections between public policymaking and public policy education, and how the two functions are unique.

A survey of several well-tested methods is provided in Unit V of the Sourcebook. The emphasis there is to find models that will give each learner practical, usable ways of anticipating and analyzing public decisions of importance to the people we educate. These methods are important. To make learning easier, videotapes are available to demonstrate most of them. (Sometimes it helps to see the author in action.)

Public policy education is not all being done by Extension specialists; two of the videotapes show work done by County Extension agents.

**Preactivity Readings:**

Read Unit V in the Sourcebook.

Scan the Fact Sheets in Unit V of this packet.

Read the Montguide "Setting Group Goals" (in Instructional Aids).

**After finishing Unit V:**

Complete the exercise, "Evaluation: Unit V."

**For Self-Study:**

Try to access all of the videotapes for this unit. (The methods taught by Egan, Wallace, and Felts-Grabarski are difficult to understand without seeing their tapes.)

For further study, and a more complete understanding of public policy education methods, read the papers in the Selected Readings by House, Wallace, and Flinchbaugh.

## Fact Sheet
## Issue Evolution and Educational Intervention

Originally developed by Charles Gratto, issue evolution and educational intervention are actually two models in one. The combined model describes how issues evolve through political action. Then it sets forth ways that educators can intervene at each stage of the issue cycle.

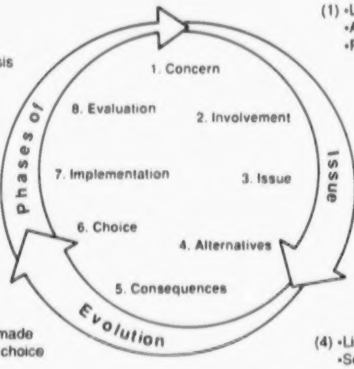
### Issue Evolution

Issues spring from (1) a concern or aggravation or someone's vision of what could be. If this concern is shared by other people, they begin their (2) involvement through informal discussion. As more people become involved in the concern, communication becomes more complex. Finally, (3) the issue emerges.

The discussion of issues usually generates differing ideas as to what could be done. These are (4) alternative solutions, each of which may be evaluated in terms of (5) its consequences.

Eventually (6) a choice is made. The choice may be to forget the whole issue and maintain the status quo; it may be a referendum or a vote by a public body. If something is to be changed, (7) implementation of the new policy is necessary. As the policy is implemented, the affected public will be involved in the (8) evaluation of the benefits and disadvantages of the choice. Evaluation is not likely to be systematic; rather, it is a social process. Evaluation may raise new concerns so that the cycle begins anew. Note that an issue may die at any stage. Also, the length of the stages is hard to predict.

EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTIONS FOR PHASES
OF ISSUE EVOLUTION



(1) •Listen
•Ask
•Provide background

(2) •Suggest sources of help
•Facilitate communication
•Publicize concern

(3) •Document and disseminate alternative views
•Clarify discussion

(4) •List alternatives
•Seek information
•Facilitate exchange of viewpoints

(5) •Assemble and distribute information on consequence(s) of alternatives

(6) •Inform how choice will be made
•Avoid advocating any one choice

(7) •Inform people about policy—how, what, who will implement

(8) •Encourage objective analysis
•Listen to those affected

## Educational Intervention

Extension agents and specialists, if they choose to intervene, have many educational options. The choice of methods will vary, depending on the stage of the issue as well as other factors. Following are examples:

**Concern:**
- Listen actively;
- Ask clarifying questions; and
- Provide background information based on research.

**Involvement**
- Provide information about organizations or individuals that might be helpful;
- Facilitate communication among interested parties; and
- Publicize the concerns through media and meetings for greater public awareness.

**Issue:**
- Document and disseminate alternative views on the issue; and
- Help clarify discussion.

**Alternatives:**
- List alternatives and circulate among interested parties;
- Seek out objective information on alternatives; and
- Facilitate communication and exchange of viewpoints.

**Consequences:**
- Assemble and distribute objective information on the consequences of each alternative.

**Choice:**
- Inform people how the choice will be made (formal/informal, decision arena, decisionmaking process);
- Do not tell people what they should do, or you lose credibility as an Extension educator. Advocating your solution is politics, not education.

**Implementation:**
- Inform people how the policy came to be; what it is intended to do; who will be responsible for promulgating rules and enforcement, and any other pertinent information.

**Evaluation:**
- Encourage objective analysis of the policy, and
- Listen to the people who are affected.

—Prepared by Verne W. House; adapted from
Gratto's "Policy Education:
A Model with Emphasis on How."

## Fact Sheet
## The Alternatives–Consequences Method of Public Policy Education

I have observed over the years, four approaches to public policy education—scientific, evangelistic, analytical, and the alternatives–consequences approach.

In the *scientific approach*, the scientist sets up criteria from which to evaluate solutions to a defined public problem. The alternative solutions are analyzed according to a set of predetermined criteria. The approach is logical, methodical, and intellectually honest. The problem with it is, to set up the criteria from which to judge solutions to public issues, scientists have to apply their values. For example, in using the scientific approach to evaluate alternative forms of taxation, progressivity is often the criterion for evaluation. The value is held that the rich should pay proportionately more taxes than the poor.

The second or *evangelistic approach* is the Ralph Nader approach. ''When the ol' bull is running down the highway hell bent for election, you don't wave a twig at him; you hit him over the head with a two-by-four.'' You exaggerate; you promote; you sell; you package. What an evangelist does in this approach is promote a solution and convince others of his or her views.

The third or *analytical approach* appears to be objective and unbiased. The analyst lists the solutions and then, for each solution, makes two lists of consequences—the advantages and the disadvantages, the pros and the cons. Those words violate objectivity. Those words in and of themselves are value judgments. What is pro to one individual, may be con to another.

The *alternatives-consequences approach* is the one pioneered by my mentors at Purdue University, J. D. ''Heavy'' Kohlmeyer and J. Carroll Bottum. First, the problem is defined in terms of the actual problem, instead of the symptoms, to get to the real underlying issue and put it in a decisionmaking framework. Then, the alternative solutions are listed; and, under each alternative, the consequences.

Several years ago in Manhattan, Kansas, we voted on a city sales tax. The intellectuals on campus were convinced the people would never vote for the tax. We just do not vote to increase our taxes. I said it would pass two to one. Why? Only the city people of Manhattan could vote on the tax proposal and one-half of the revenues from that proposed sales tax had to go, by ordinance, to reduce property taxes. Who pays the sales tax in Manhattan, Kansas? The soldiers at Fort Riley, the students at the University, and the farmers and rural residents in surrounding counties. That is the same reason the tea was thrown overboard in Boston many years ago. Taxation without representation. They could not vote. But they were going to pay the tax. The sales tax was a pro to the city residents and con to the rural residents, the students, and the soldiers. What is an advantageous consequence to one group of people will very likely be a disadvantageous consequence to another group of people. If you are going to teach objective public policy education, get those words [pro and con] out of your vocabulary. They are biased, unobjective, value judgment terms. The neutral term is "consequences." Instead of two lists, you need just one.

The consequences of that local sales tax will be that city residents will benefit directly from it through property tax relief; the students, the soldiers, and the farmers will pay it, along with city residents. They may get some benefits, such as police protection when they are in town, improved streets, and so on. List all the consequences and do not break them into pros and cons, because you immediately choose sides when you do that.

## How to Use the Alternatives-Consequences Method

The first step in the alternatives-consequences method is to define the problem. The second step is to list the alternatives and their consequences. Then stop.

> I have seen many public policy educators follow this approach. Open the discussion to the interested parties, and someone in the audience will inevitably say, "Well, professor, what do you think?" My answer is I do not think on that particular subject that day. I have never found the real decisionmakers asking that question. They know who is going to make the decision—them, not me.

Another option that we have used effectively is to divide the audience into discussion groups. These small groups discuss the alternatives and their consequences, and attempt to arrive at a compromise. Each group reports back what it decided. Small group decisionmaking serves a lot of purposes. First, it is an educational exchange between participants. The farmer has to sit down with the labor union official; they have to talk straight with each other, and compromise. Second, everybody gets a chance to talk, so they "vent their spleen" in the discussion groups, not in the question-and-answer period, which the educator has to handle.

## Expected Results

Of the four approaches to public policy education that I have observed over the years, I believe the effective Extension policy educator will make best use of the fourth one. I have had people say, "Flinchbaugh, you are a fraud. You always put your favorite alternative last." That's not true. I always begin with the same option, though. One alternative to every public policy issue is the status quo.

If you follow this objective educational route, you are going to have trouble getting along with some of the Kings, since you may pose a threat to them. You are especially going to have trouble with the paid employees of special-interest groups. But you will not have any difficulty with boards of directors and chief executive offices of organizations, because the Kingmakers and the real decisionmakers understand the importance of objective information.

—Excerpts from Flinchbaugh's "How to Do
Policy Education—'The Ten Commandments'"

## Fact Sheet
## Distinguishing Symptoms from Public Policy Problems

''What is the tax problem?'' asks the educator. ''That is simple,'' responds the taxpayer. ''My taxes are too high!''

''What is the teen drug problem?'' asks the educator. ''That is simple,'' responds the citizen. ''Teenagers use too many drugs.''

''What is the social security problem?'' asks the educator. ''That is simple,'' says the retired person. ''Social security payments are too low.''

People normally define problems in terms of their own values and how something affects their life. However, the ''problems'' defined in the examples just given are only symptoms of the problem faced by public policy decisionmakers.

*Symptoms* are phenomena, attributes, circumstances, indicators, or evidence that a problem may exist. Symptoms may include a combination of facts and value judgments.

*Problems,* on the other hand, pose an issue for debate on the alternative solutions. To provide a framework for discussing all possible relevant alternatives, the public policy problem must be posed without prejudice or value judgments. Problems often are posed in the form of a question.

The tax problem redefined might be: ''How much revenue should be raised to finance the functions of government?'' This problem poses the issue so that all of the alternatives can be discussed without prejudice, including lower, higher, or constant taxes.

The drug problem redefined might be: ''What should we do with and for teenagers who use or are likely to use drugs?''

The social security problem might be: ''What rules should be used to adjust social security payments?''

Sometimes one problem raises several related problems that must be defined if you are presenting the overall picture. After we decide the amount of revenue to be raised to finance government, for example, we must decide what the mix of revenue should be; where it will come from; and how the spending mix should be organized.

Sometimes, one problem is part of a larger problem that also must be discussed and solved before the original problem becomes relevant. For example, the social security problem is part of the larger problem: ''Who should provide care for the retired people in our society?'' In this case, there are several options beyond social security and government-sponsored retirement plans.

As a result, the policy educator often must be prepared to break down a complex issue into each of its simplified parts. Then the educator can reassemble the simplified problems in an organized fashion to present the overall perspective.

After the related public policy problems are analyzed, the educator is prepared to organize discussion of the problems in relation to the interests and prior knowledge of the target audience. The overall perspective can be presented first, with the details of each major policy problem added later. Or, the problem most salient to the audience may be detailed first, and the other related problems discussed and examined afterward to develop the overall perspective.

—Prepared by Mark A. Edelman, Public Policy Analyst,
Iowa State University, Ames

## Fact Sheet
## SHAPES: Egan Style

The process described here is an adaptation of the Shared Process Evaluation System (SHAPES) developed by Lynn Davie, Terry Patterson, Dorothy McKeracher, and Richard Cawley at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. Designed to evaluate completed programs and plan future ones, the method involves developing a graphic chart to outline and organize the progression of people and events involved in a project from beginning to end. The actors and their period of involvement in the project are recorded on the graph. Their degree of involvement is added to the graph as the project progresses. The social action process describes the following steps of progress in the policy issue.

*Prior situation:* Give careful consideration to the past history of an issue. Recognizing those who have initiated some degree of concern in the past provides continuity and avoids the potential for public encounter. People who previously have worked on an issue may be insulted if their thoughts are overlooked, and may precipitate public dissent.

*Situation:* Make a complete analysis of the issue as it stands so all decisionmakers and involved citizens will be informed. When ultimatums are issued and concerns are announced, define them in such a way that there are no misgivings and misconceptions about what is needed or wanted. The statement can be changed or be expanded as study progresses and clearer definitions are developed.

*Initiating set:* The people who raise an issue are termed the initiating set, and often continue to be major actors in the total process. Consider who will be the strongest person to present formally the concern or issue. Lack of a sense of legitimacy or respect in the community can kill a project before it is ever born.

*Legitimizers:* Legitimizers are both formal and nonformal. The public may not be aware that an issue is supported by certain individuals, but the issue will not advance if the right people do not support those who are "carrying the ball" and the way it is being handled. Pay careful attention to legitimizers.

*Diffusers:* Once the issue has become legitimate and the most influential people are supportive, it is time to go public. Diffusers are those carriers of information who make the problem become a public issue of concern and involvement. A well-thought-out method for diffusing information can forestall conflict among polarized advocacy groups.

*Commitment to action:* People who do not understand an issue are unlikely to take action. A high degree of commitment is necessary for success.

*Goals:* Prepare strong goal statements or objectives so everyone will know where the group is headed, and what the group is willing to do to solve the problem.

*Means:* The means define how the goals are to be achieved. Carefully consider the alternative consequences of each proposed solution.

*Plan of action:* The plan of action outlines each move the group will make to accomplish the goals. Assignments are made and resources arranged to implement the program.

*Mobilizing and organizing resources:* Resources are prepared for executing the plan of action.

*Launching:* The plan is implemented by the group through public meetings, personal contacts, surveys, and other methods called for in the planning process. Timing is important if an effective program is to result. Follow a planned sequence.

*Action:* Carry out the planned program to reach the goals intended.

*Evaluation:* Continued evaluation is necessary to determine the program's success or failure and the probable cause. Try to eliminate any bias that may be present on the part of the evaluators.

SHAPES is a simple method for identifying the strong points and pitfalls of any program. SHAPES graphically portrays the participants and events of the program as it moves through the stages in the social action process. ''Holes'' or discontinuities in this chart pinpoint difficulties in fragmented, uncoordinated programs, and help to explain puzzling results. (See SHAPES chart.)

| **Stillwater County Planning Sept . ,1976 — Project Events** | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| Prior Situation | ABCD JPR | | | | | | | | | | |
| Situation | | ABCD JPR | | | | | | | | | |
| Initiating Set | | | ABCD JPR | ACDEF GHJ | ACD | ACD | | | | | |
| Legitimizers | | | | | BCA | BC | | | | | |
| Diffusion Set | | | | | | G | ABFG HL | | | | |
| Define Needs | | | | | | ADCEF GHI | ACD | | | | |
| Commitment | | | | | | CEFG HIA | AC | ACD | ACD | | |
| Goals | | | | | | ACDE FGL | AC | ACD | AC | | |
| Means | | | | | | | | AC | ACDE | ACDE FG | |
| Plan | | | | | | | | | AC | ACDEF GEH - S | |
| Resources | | | | | | | | | | ACDE FGI - S | |
| Launching | | | | | | | | | | ACDE FGI - S | |
| Action | | | | | | | | | | ACD E - S | |
| Evaluation | | | | | | | | | | | |

**SHAPES Chart for Stillwater County Planning**

**Project Events**

1. Planner acquaints himself with Stillwater County.
2. All information previously studied is to be assembled.
3. The data are updated.
4. Meet with people in the community to provide input and analyze data.
5. Set priorities to determine major areas of emphasis.
6. Establish committees according to emphasis.
7. Coordinate planning and information with city-county planning board.
8. Publicize information with news media and community meetings.
9. Develop the comprehensive plan.
10. Committees continue to implement plans.
11. Evaluate the process.

**Actors**

A. County Planner
B. County Commissioners
C. City/County Planning Board
D. County Extension Agent
E. Citizens
F. Farmers
G. Ranchers
H. Small tract owners
I. Subdividers
J. County officers
K. Schools
L. Business Community
M. Agri-business
N. Miners
O. Forest Service
P. SCS
Q. RC & D
R. ASCS
S. Fish and Game

The first step toward making a SHAPES chart is to list all individuals, groups, and organizations that might be affected by the public policy issue. Then, develop a SHAPES chart by listing the stages of the social action process, from "prior situation" to "evaluation," down the left margin of the chart. These headings will form the rows of the chart. Next, build a list of events or happenings associated with the issue to date. List these across the top of the chart to form the columns—and leave room for the blank columns in which you will project future action steps.

Now examine your list of the groups and individuals who might be involved in the program. These are the initiators, legitimizers, diffusers, planners, doers, and all others who play a role in development. You will probably need to give them a letter code so that you can enter them on your chart. If you wish, rate the knowledge or involvement of each actor with a number code—from a high of "7" to a low of "1."

Plot the participants and their degree of involvement on the chart. For example, if your first event is "area approved for toxic waste dump in 1957," and this is a past action in which the county commissioners had high involvement and the Extension specialist had virtually none, you might enter "CC-7" and "ES-1" in the cell formed by the intersection of "event number 1" and "prior situation." Fill in the past and present on the chart, trying to get a good range of expert and political opinion on "who did what and when." Then work with program planners and other relevant audiences to fill in the future: to analyze stages that were ignored, past mistakes that are still felt today, events that must take place, and the people who must be involved in them, if the program is to succeed. If the pattern appears as a diagonal matrix, the issue is moving to conclusion. If it does not, check the list of actors to make sure that those who might be involved actually are.

This method literally gives the big picture on a program: it can develop into a butcher paper chart that is 30 feet long. A smooth, diagonal line from start to finish shows events that have taken into account the social action process through which change occurs. ''Holes'' or broken lines that show many false starts indicate a need to examine more closely who was involved, and to what degree.

SHAPES works as a planning tool, as well as a means for evaluating public policy issues. It is visual and informal—every viewer is given the opportunity to suggest changes. The model allows new participants to enter the process with a sense of continuity, and organizes a massive amount of information so that discussion can be kept on target, with the program's goals always in the forefront of any debate.

—Charles E. Egan, Stillwater County
Extension Agent, Montana

## An Application of SHAPES: "Operation Clean Sweep" —Stillwater Solid-Waste Program

By **Charles E. Egan and William F. Brinkel, Jr.**

"Operation Clean Sweep" is an example of the actual application of SHAPES. This application is to be used in conjunction with the Fact Sheet, "SHAPES, Egan Style."

### Background

Stillwater County, Montana, residents were faced with a difficult situation when the State Health Department threatened to close existing disposal sites in each community as early as 1970. The county commissioners attempted to purchase land, but farmers were unwilling to sell it for solid-waste disposal sites. The alternatives were limited for this county of 4,632 residents.

### Multicounty Solid-Waste Study

The Carbon-Stillwater Community Resource Development Committee reviewed the dilemma and suggested a multicounty study of the problem. The Extension agent proposed a plan to the county commissioners and the Stillwater Development Organization. With their support, the proposal was carried to the South Central Montana Development Federation on behalf of the Stillwater representative, who also was a county commissioner.

The Federation accepted the suggestion for study and called 63 decisionmakers from county, state, and local government, as well as private enterprise. The decision was unanimous to develop a complete study of the situation and offer alternatives for correction. Extension, Forest Service, Sanitation, and Soil Conservation Service representatives served on a committee to design a survey to gather solid-waste facts about each county. Extension agents in each of the 11 counties played an active part in providing data to supplement the study. Information was compiled by an intern. The completed study was presented to Stillwater county officials.

### Stillwater County Review

Using the 11-county study as a basis, the Stillwater county commissioners appointed a committee of Soil Conservation Service, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, Extension, and Sanitation personnel to review the material. Each of the five alternatives was weighed for feasibility, including economics, and presented to the county commissioners.

The five alternatives presented were:

**Alternative 1:** 40-yard-capacity drop box system offering once-a-week pickup, with twice weekly in Absarokee and no collection in Rapelje or Nye. This included a landfill in the county.
**Cost:** $32.69 per ton, or $5.60 per yard.

**Alternative 2:** 40-yard drop box system, once-a-week pickup, twice weekly in Absarokee, with pickup in Rapelje, Nye, and Dean.
**Cost:** $36.19 per ton, or $6.20 per yard.

**Alternative 3:** 4-yard green box system, pickup once a week, with twice a week in Absarokee. Includes a 30-yard front loader unit. Suggests a landfill in the county.
**Cost:** $24.46 per ton, or $5.26 per yard.

**Alternative 4:** Utilize a landfill in each community, with no collection. The bid on operation of a landfill was $55,000.
**Cost:** $25.00 per ton, or $5.23 per yard, plus cost for moving equipment to each community.

**Alternative 5:** 4-yard green boxes using a transfer trailer to haul to Billings landfill. The transfer station would be located in Columbus. Annual costs, with services of collection and disposal, $44,800.
**Cost:** $20.00 per ton, or $4.26 per yard.

A combination of funding and systems was finally chosen as the best method. A system of rural collection, using a front-end loader and 4-yard boxes with a central loading ramp and trailer for hauling to Billings for disposal at a cost of $2.00 per rural household and 60 cents per household in Columbus was adopted. Revenue-sharing funds totaling $114,000 were used to buy the equipment.

## Presentation to People

Bill Brinkel, County Commissioner, suggested traveling to each community to present the idea of the green box system. A slide series was prepared to explain the facts about the solid-waste program. The slide series was presented by Charles Egan, the County Extension Agent. Brinkel followed with a presentation of the budget, and answered questions. One hundred and eighty-one people attended nine meetings in various communities.

## Factors Considered

The final decision was based on some facts about Stillwater County.

1. Some 4,632 people lived in the county.
- Family size was 2.6 people.
- The northern portion was sparsely populated.
- There were 7 small unincorporated towns.
- Columbus had a collection system and was incorporated.

2. Landfill sites were limited.
- Soil was not suitable for covering and drainage in most cases.
- Landowners and users of public land were not keen on the idea of a landfill on their premises.

3. Existing sites were not properly managed.
- Open burning was practiced.
- Covering was sporadic and poorly managed.
- Users were careless of where and in what they dumped their waste.
- Papers and movable items scattered to cover adjacent land.

4. Businesses in each small unincorporated town practiced burning and had varying distances and ways of disposal.

5. Agencies, such as the Forest Service, Fish and Game, and others, needed suitable disposal sites.

6. The tax base for the county was primarily agriculture-related and, under existing Montana law, the landowners would be responsible for collection and disposal costs should a solid-waste district not be created.

7. Estimated amount of solid waste generated:
- Each family generated 65 gallons per week.
- 1,781 families produced 135 cubic yards of waste per week.
- Uncompacted waste weighs 125 pounds per yard.
- In one week, 16,875 pounds were generated.
- 876,500 pounds were generated per year.
- Families generated 488 tons per year.
- Businesses accounted for 219 units or 512 pounds or 256 tons per year.
- The county had 400 cabin sites with homes for recreational purposes.

## Creation of a District

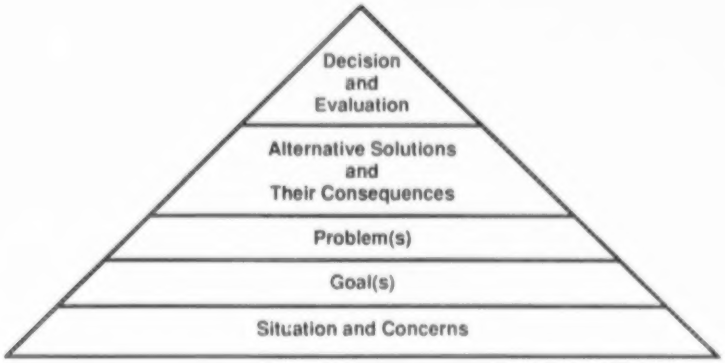
A summary of comments at the community meetings and public sentiment was submitted to the county commissioners. They chose to create the district and implement the project. Each homeowner was offered the opportunity to protest. A public hearing for protests was held. Egan presented the problems and Stillwater's solution, with Brinkel fielding questions and handling the hearing. Of those attending, 4 percent protested; the choice was to implement the system and create the district.

## Evaluation

A complete evaluation was done by the County Extension Agent and the Sanitation representative. This evaluation included the people involved and steps taken relative to the social action process. The county commissioners reviewed the evaluation and discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the program.

## Fact Sheet
## California's Group Decision Process

Issues of public interest often involve heated debate among factions that have strongly polarized views. The Group Decision Process is designed to help the educator set up a learning environment in which to help the group focus its analytic energy. The role of the educator is established at the outset as that of a neutral facilitator, rather than the "expert" with the most knowledge. The Group Decision Process has been applied to a variety of situations in California.



**The Problem-Solving Approach**

At any point in the process, new information can be introduced, or new concerns can shift the course of analysis. You may even find yourself working on a different problem than you began with, because your group established a different goal as it learned more. This open-endedness makes participants confident that resolution is possible, and that all sides will be heard without bias.

The process puts the educator in the role of being aware of the discussion's progress and of guiding it to resolution. It is your educational responsibility to keep it from stalling, and to move the group through problem identification toward discussion of possible answers. Remember that if you fall into being a decisionmaker, your role as an educator is over.

The process is an elaboration of the following steps:

### Situation

First, have the participants identify a topic that will provide a focused common ground. Second, elicit descriptions of the situation surrounding the topic; get at the heart of why the participants are all assembled. Include history, background, facts, feelings, concerns, perceptions, identification of leading forces, and so on.

Anything goes! The situation has to do with what we know about something (and what we do not know); what we are concerned about; and why we are concerned. Encourage participants to express themselves.

Record the group's ideas on flip charts. This listing serves as the "group memory." Tape up the sheets around the room so everyone can see them and refer back to them at any time.

## Goal

If everyone is happy with the status quo, there will be no need to change anything—but where there is concern, there is also a feeling that things could be better. Specifying what could be better brings about the goal. Once the situation and concerns surrounding your topic are brought out to a sufficient degree (feel free to add to them at any time), it is time to set a goal or ask, "What is it that you want to change from the existing situation?" Work on one goal at a time, even though several may emerge.

## Problem

The problem is simply the "how to attain the goal" part of the process. Once the goal is identified, replace the "is to" with a "how to." The problem to resolve thus becomes a simply focused question, not an elaborate preamble, statement, or justification of a position.

## Alternative Solutions

Once the problem is phrased as a question, many possible answers can surface. Various ways to achieve the goal and thereby solve the problem can be analyzed. Here is where different values and knowledge about a topic are so important.

Draw out the various possibilities from your group. Some ideas may sound silly or impossible. Write them down anyway, and cross them out later when you do a general "weeding out." The objective now is to record all the vested interest answers to the identified problem, while avoiding value conflicts. The challenge is to get the group to create additional solutions of their own. These "what if" analyses can provide the basis on which a group can make a decision, or ask for further information.

Creativity on the part of the educator is crucial. Group trust also is vital. Each person may feel vulnerable in this informational task. Encouragement, positive reinforcement, focus, and neutrality are all urged at this point. Remember the educational goal: to draw upon the group and its creativity.

## Consequences

After alternative solutions have been identified, address the consequences of each solution. Consider each alternative separately. Ask, "What would happen if we actually implemented alternative #1?" Repeat the method for each of the alternatives presented.

Most of the criteria for evaluating the chosen alternative can be found in the concerns that were voiced for the situation. How well will the alternative chosen reduce the fears; eliminate the concern; reduce uncertainty; and get things going again? Who pays the costs and who receives the benefits? Individual values and freedom of expression are very important here—in determining what is a more desirable state of affairs, and in selecting a solution from among the alternatives.

## The Decision

At this point, the Extension educator steps down, while the professional analyst may choose to remain. The stage has been set for the group (or each individual participant) to make a decision, or even to take the analysis of alternatives back to its advocacy groups for review. Decisionmaking is where politics and personal values enter. Since the decision is based on value judgments, there is no "right" or "wrong" attached to the process, or, for that matter, to you as the facilitator, as long as you remain in that role.

The crux of the process is that you have brought the group to a focus on a particular issue; led it to a definition of the problem; allowed it to be constructively creative about ways to resolve the problem; and then offered the chance to make a decision.

## Evaluation

Evaluation of a decision comes full circle. It is important to ask whether or not each suggested alternative can really achieve the goal(s) identified and thereby resolve the problem. You can be of great help in identifying the values espoused by the group in the situation statement. Will the group's concerns be alleviated or amplified by implementing a particular solution? What trade-offs are necessary to alleviate tension? Will new (greater) problems and tensions occur as a result of the solution alternative adopted? Thinking through probable outcomes—both intended and incidental—before a course of action is implemented can prevent many future difficulties.

—Developed from the work of L. Tim Wallace

## Fact Sheet
## Cornell's Planning Matrix—Planning a Comprehensive Educational Program on Community Issues

### Topic or Area of Concern

Identify the topic or area of concern and write it at the top of the first page of the accompanying worksheet. (Examples: farm family stress, unemployment, child abuse.)

### Situation Analysis

1. In the first column, indicate *who* is affected by the topic at each of the three levels. For individuals and families, you may want to indicate specific age, income, occupational or racial groups, residents of particular locations, and so on. For the other two levels, list specific groups and organizations and specific decisionmakers. (Examples: farmers; FHA, ASCS, lending institutions, mental health institutions, churches; town boards, school boards, tax assessors.)

2. In the second column, indicate *how* people at each of the three levels are affected by the topic. What specific problems do they experience? Try to identify underlying conditions as well as symptoms. What strengths or opportunities are present that can be built upon?

3. While the first two columns deal with *existing conditions*, the next column asks you to specify *desired future conditions*. What would you like to accomplish through educational programs for audiences at each of the three levels? What result indicators would you look for? Think about ways to prevent future problems as well as correct existing ones.

### Possible Educational Programs

1. Identify possible educational programs that would help people at each of the three levels move from existing conditions to desired conditions. Begin with the boxes that are highlighted. What programs should be delivered to individuals and families? What programs should be delivered to groups and organizations? What programs should be delivered to decisionmakers?

2. Then, consider the other six boxes. What do individuals and families need to learn about the organizational level? About the decisionmaking level? (Examples: services available from agencies; information about local government; how decisions are made, and how to influence the process.) Similarly, what do groups and organizations need to learn about the individual and family or decisionmaking levels? (Examples: information about families and their problems; information about funding sources and constraints.) Finally, what do decisionmakers need to learn about the individual and family or organizational levels? (Examples: information about families and their problems; information about services available

and possible gaps.) [*Note*: You may not have anything to add in these boxes. If you have done a thorough job with the highlighted boxes, you may have already answered these questions.]

### Thinking About Priorities

1. Look over your list of possible programs and check (✓) those that are currently being delivered.

2. Star (*) programs that could be delivered fairly easily by modifying or adjusting existing programs.

3. Underline high-priority programs that are not currently being delivered.

4. (Optional) Make a list of existing programs or activities that may need to be phased out in order to make room for new priorities.

— Alan J. Hahn

**TOPIC**
**or AREA OF CONCERN:**

| SITUATION ANALYSIS | | |
|---|---|---|
| **EXISTING CONDITIONS** | | **DESIRED FUTURE CONDITIONS** |
| What individuals and families are affected by this topic? | How are individuals and families affected? | What would you like to accomplish through educational programs for individuals and families? |
| What groups and organizations are affected by this topic? | How are groups and organizations affected? | What would you like to accomplish through educational programs for groups and organizations? |
| What community decisionmakers are affected by this topic? | How are community decisionmakers affected? | What would you like toaccomplish througheducational programs for community decisionmakers? |

## POSSIBLE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

| FOR INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES | FOR GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS | FOR COMMUNITY DECISIONMAKERS |
|---|---|---|
| What educational programs should be delivered to individuals and families? | What do groups and organizations need to learn about the individual and family level? | What do community decisionmakers need to learn about individuals and families? |
| What do individuals and families need to learn about the organizational level? | What educational programs should be delivered to groups and organizations? | What do community decisionmakers need to learn about the organizational level? |
| What do individuals and families need to learn about the decisionmaking level? | What do groups and organizations need to learn about the decisionmaking process? | What educational programs should be delivered to community decisionmakers? |

—Prepared by David Deshler and Alan Hahn;
adapted from Boyd, Apps, and Others (1980)

## Fact Sheet
## Ten Commandments for Public Policy Education

**1. Get Acquainted**

- Keep in constant touch with fellow professionals, local leaders, and decision-makers.
- "You must have your ear to the ground constantly."

**2. Choose a Controversial Issue**

- Choose an issue in which the "teachable moment" has arrived and create an educational environment in which to discuss it.
- I saw J. B. Kohlmeyer go into a school consolidation meeting where police had been ordered to protect him. After some small talk, Kohlmeyer said, "You are here to talk about school consolidation. That's not the problem. That is not the issue. What I have come to talk about is what quality of education do you want for your children?" The controversy in the room dropped tenfold . . . the issue was in a decisionmaking framework.

**3. Do Your Homework**

- Understand the problem and establish the facts. Outline all possible alternatives and consequences.
- "Become the number one disseminator of the facts. Knowledge is powerful."

**4. Work Within the System**

- Understand it; use it; know who the Kingmakers are, and talk their language, not academic jargon.
- "Learn to use the media effectively. They can help; and, if you get crosswise with them, they can destroy your credibility."

**5. Be Objective**

- Espouse no cause; align yourself with no one politician, political party, farm organization, or civic group.
- "Don't impose your values on the public. No one is perfectly objective, but work at it."

**6. Tell it Like it Is**

- Make sure you have the facts and you will survive.
- "Potshots will be taken at you, but those who understand the mission of an educational institution will come to your rescue."

**7. Be Available,**

- Help people do what they want to do.
- "Put legs on their ideas."

**8. Do Not Be Afraid to Make Predictions**

- Challenge people. Explore options with them.

### 9. Admit Mistakes

- We are human, so mistakes will happen.
- "If you are wrong, admit it. That keeps your integrity intact."

### 10. Be an Educator

- Be a disseminator of knowledge rather than a reformer of society according to your values.
- "I think we have learned, in over 200 years, that solving public issues by the collective intelligence and authority of society is far more acceptable than solving them by the intelligence and authority of any one individual member of society."

—Adapted from Flinchbaugh's "How to Do Policy Education—The Ten Commandments"

# Fact Sheet
# Choosing a Method

When several methods are presented, it is normal to ask: How do I know which one to use? The wisest answer is: It matters less which method you use than it does that you use one. In other words, it is most important that you choose a method and use it. A method provides a systematic approach, a structure that you can communicate to others, and a structure that will encourage participation by affected people while it identifies you as having a special role in policymaking—educator.

The six policy education methods summarized above are similar in these ways: They all assume that issues evolve. They all help identify educational aspects of issues. They help us to analyze opportunities for education but, with the exception of the Group Decision Process, they don't specify the educational methods to be used. The most obvious similarity is that the alternatives-consequences idea overlays all of the methods; hence, so does the concern about objectivity.

These six are unique in some ways, too. For certain audiences, you may find one superior to others. Some methods may seem easier for you to use. Some require more advance work by research and extension than others; some require no information other than what the participants have or are willing to get during the process.

The Iowa and Cornell models imply agreement at the highest administrative levels on a topic and commitment of educational resources. The fact that Cornell is doing this now demonstrates that it is possible. The Group Decision Process requires strong ''people skills'' and administrative support for the educator to be involved with a group of people who want to develop policy. Some of these methods may seem formidable. But, there are methods here that any of us can use. The issue evolution-educational intervention model is easy to use. So are SHAPES and the Cornell matrix. And, the alternatives-consequences approach is available and usable by virtually every Extension educator.

None of these methods adequately account for the role of communications in the policymaking process. A venerable colleague, Rex Campbell, claims that the most difficult task the educator faces is to find some way to get people to agree on the problem. (Note that is also the first objective of the Group Decisions Process.)

People typically identify the problem in an individualistic way and begin to advocate *their* solution to the problem before they try to get agreement as to the cause. This aspect of the communication problem encourages people to jump ahead in the policymaking process to prematurely begin an action program that usually ends in rejection. If they publicly commit themselves to defend their solution and it is subsequently rejected, then they will probably either oppose any other solution or stop participating. (Egan refers to this behavior as ''barroom commitment.'') The value conflicts discussed previously present the most serious obstacles to compromise.

None of the methods accounts adequately for the communication problems with which policy educators must deal. Policy educators are urged to study the methods in **Module 5: Working With Groups and Organizations**. One simply cannot be too effective at working with group communication problems.

—Prepared by Verne W. House

## COMPARING PUBLIC POLICY EDUCATION METHODS

| Model/Method | Focus | Use | Limitations |
|---|---|---|---|
| Issue Evolution–Educational Intervention | Issue cycle, from individual concern to public resolution. | Describe roles for politics, then education at any stage of the issue cycle. | All parties do not become involved nor move through the stages simultaneously. |
| SHAPES, Egan Style | Documents who is involved as an issue progresses toward resolution. | See that all affected parties are involved; compare to steps in social action. | Not specific as to Extension educator's role as information provider or process teacher. |
| California Group Decision Process | Answers lie within those involved in a decisionmaking process. Information will be secured when needed. | Intense involvement of leaders of an interest group, committee, or others who will focus energy on a single issue. | Group leader must have respect of group and command of process. |
| Alternatives and Consequences | Issue definition, identification of alternatives, information about consequences. | Organize informational programs that avoid value judgments by the Extension educator. | Provides little guidance for early and later stages of issue cycles. |
| Cornell Planning Matrix | Situation and program needs at local, state, and national levels. | Defines conditions expected as result of Extension program. | Overlooks issue evolution. |
| Iowa Public Affairs Planning Model | Planning the educational program. | Detailed attention to large-scale programs. | Assumes whole institution level of resources and commitment at highest level. |

—Prepared by Verne W. House

## "Headlines": A Simulation One City's Future: How Was Policy Made?

"Headlines" is a simulation, an activity that provides us with a lifelike experience in a safe setting—so we can "feel" it, take risks, and learn without suffering real-life consequences if mistakes are made.

"Headlines" requires that you play the parts of city council members and other interested parties who are responsible for deciding whether to renew the downtown shopping area in your small city; do nothing; or allow a developer to build a new shopping mall.

### Objectives

The first objective of this simulation is to gain an understanding of how public policy in a typical hometown can and does evolve, by enabling you to leave your role briefly as an educator and step into the shoes of a public decisionmaker or advocate.

The second objective is to apply what you have learned about issue identification and the issue cycle to make the best possible decisions as a council member or citizen in this situation.

The third objective is to analyze the situation and determine where, how, and why appropriate educational programming can be introduced to help clientele make quality public policy decisions in similar situations.

### About the Tiers

The simulation has two parts, or "tiers." The learning objectives can be reached by using "Tier 1" materials only. However, "Tier 2" involvement adds to the reality of the experience and offers the opportunity to see more of the implications, alternatives, and consequences.

### Have Fun

Simulations are intended to involve the whole person. Go with it, participate imaginatively and fully! You will have fun, and learn a great deal.

—Developed and written by
Jacqui MacConnell

## Handout for "Headlines": A Simulation

### Your Assignment

YOUR IDENTITY and some additional background are revealed in the attached envelope. Read the enclosed information now, silently.

Leader: TAPE AN ENVELOPE HERE
WITH AN IDENTITY AND CLUE CUE,
AND A NAME TAG FOR THE CHARACTER

YOUR MISSION, should you choose to accept it, is to convince the City Council, and other members of the public, of your viewpoint. It is essential to the future of the community that you are successful.

YOU WILL HAVE THE NEXT 20 MINUTES TO PREPARE.

First, put on your name tag. Read your identity clue and the Background for "Headlines."

Then, get ready as you see best. You may want to scan the headline articles and mark important points for your case.

Use your coalition-building skills to identify other likely supporters of your viewpoint, and combine some of your efforts, if you wish. Improvise!

Develop charts or any other visual aids you like.

AT THE END OF THE CITY COUNCIL HEARING, A VOTE WILL BE TAKEN TO MEASURE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUR EFFORTS.

GOOD LUCK!

## Background

### Urban vs. Suburban Regional Shopping Mall
### Billington, Washington

Billington is a town of approximately 50,000 in a county of approximately 110,000 people. A large Canadian city is 60 miles north and a very large metropolitan area is 92 miles south. All are connected by a major interstate highway that provides easy freeway access.

The town itself sits on forested hills and bluffs above a good harbor, Billington Bay, with deep-water port facilities. The local economic base consists of a pulp and paper mill, Great Northern; a four-year state university, BWU; two oil refineries; an aluminum reduction plant; farming; fishing; timber industries; city and county governments; and a variety of small businesses and services. Billington is the county seat.

The downtown core of Billington, most frequently referred to as the central business district, or CBD, has many older buildings of historic and architectural note. The bay, some large scenic islands, and a glacier-clad mountain can be viewed from various sites downtown. The physical layout of the Billington CBD and certain other of its features are not conducive to modern shopping patterns. The community is ready for an improvement or a relocation of these facilities.

Your assignment in this case study will be to assume the role of one of the community members and convince the Billington City Council to accept your viewpoint at a public hearing that occurs in September of 1982.

A time line of relevant local events leading up to this hearing, as revealed in newspaper headlines, is provided to assist you. You will be given additional secret clues about local events later in this simulation.

## "Headlines" Tier 1: Newspaper Accounts of the Situation

The events and quotes you are about to read have been substantially altered. They should not be regarded as historic fact.

February 19, 1982: **Local Improvement District Under Way**

Construction began today on the $2.75 million project that will improve parking, circulation, traffic flow, and provide for pedestrian amenities such as trees, benches, fountains, and small plazas in an attempt to modernize and improve the city's central business district core. These improvements will be jointly financed by local business people and state funding. It is hoped that the new facilities, coupled with the 365-stall "Parkade," a municipal parking garage built in 1970, will increase the pleasure and sales in downtown shopping.

### March 2, 1982: Major Developer Looking at Billington

Sandhem, Inc., of Sacramento, California, is seriously entertaining a proposal to rehabilitate the downtown business core into a weatherized, enclosed, regional shopping mall, to be called the Billington Mall. The project is estimated at $50 million and would result in 300 permanent new jobs in the community. At least one new "major," or large department store, in addition to the three currently present, will be sought to secure the success of the venture.

### March 3, 1982: More Details Revealed From Sandhem, Inc., Plan for Billington Mall

The Sacramento development firm, one of the ten largest in downtown revitalizations in the U.S., pledged a 417,000- square-foot enclosed shopping facility, and requested the cooperation of city officials in funding and building two parking structures sufficient to house 2,000 vehicles. Abundant, weather-protected parking is required, the developer maintains, to lure people to the downtown who are currently driving away from the area to shop in Northgate, Alderwood, and other Seattle area suburban regional malls.

### March 7, 1982: It May Not Work

David Abel, a well-respected local real estate developer, says his firm commissioned a 1980 study on the downtown mall issue. The results of this study, developed by the nationally recognized Quinmax & Associates, a San Francisco firm, included the need for covered parking, first-class merchandise selections, and a significant financial contribution on the part of the city as key elements to any downtown mall's success.

The city would be requested to provide all of the needed parking and street improvements at no cost to the developer. This is necessary, says Trigon Development Corporation president, Abel, because land at a town fringe or suburban site is cheaper to buy and easier to build on. Developers cannot profit from building in town, by comparison.

Abel has controlling rights to what is generally regarded as the best piece of commercial ground for a suburban mall. It is north of the downtown area by about four miles. He said his firm commissioned the Quinmax study to determine the feasibility of a downtown mall, but concluded it would be too costly to be profitable, and too difficult to get the myriad of downtown landowners and retailers to cooperate in a common effort. Building on his nursery site, the one north of town, presents none of those potential obstacles, he maintains.

### March 7, 1982: Merchants Mixed in Reaction to Sandhem, Inc., Plan

Local merchants today expressed concern about some of the facets of the new Billington Mall plan. Some of the merchants have been in their current locations for as many as 30 years. "What happens to my customer trade?" asks Greg Dodden. "A good price has been offered to my family for the real estate, but where am I supposed to relocate the business?"

March 8, 1982: **More Merchant Concerns Surface**

Some merchants are not convinced that the Sandhem, Inc., proposal is the key to downtown salvation. "Whether the mall is built downtown, or on the edge of town, it will still mean the same thing to my operation," says Bill Sharp, owner of a local camera shop. "We'll have to rent space in the new mall at either location in order to remain competitive. That means our monthly rent rate will quadruple. My business can't afford it."

Larry Allman, owner of Allman's Feed and Seed, the oldest business in Billington, says, "Where are we going to go? A feed mill operation obviously won't fit in anywhere in a glossy new mall. And my building would be one of the ones torn down to make way for the new structures. Why do we need to tear down historic buildings to 'save' downtown?"

March 10, 1982: **Downtown Supporters Rally**

"It's do or die," says Brian Gundel, Billington native and strong supporter of the downtown revitalization efforts. "Either we take major steps downtown now to improve our retail shopping opportunities, or the heart is going to go right out of this community when a large regional mall is constructed somewhere on the edge of town, or even in Skokie County, to the south of us. We can't afford to let that happen."

Big stumbling blocks to the Sandhem, Inc., mall proposal for downtown Billington could be getting the 28 affected property owners to agree to sell their properties for a reasonable price so that the developers can proceed, and getting the city to agree to finance and construct 2,100 more parking spaces downtown to ensure success of the venture.

March 17, 1982: **Trigon Drops Mall Plans**

David Abel, president of Trigon Development Corp., today announced his firm's intention not to pursue plans for construction of a large regional mall on the old state nursery site north of Billington. Citing the strength of the Sandhem, Inc., contacts with major department stores, whose pledged presence will be essential to the success of any mall venture, Abel said his firm will pursue other uses for their large potential commercial site.

April 4, 1982: **Mayor Warns Against Complacency**

Mayor of Billington, Ken Hart, an outspoken supporter of downtown retail retention efforts, cautioned against a false sense of security just because Trigon is now apparently out of the mall race. "There is an attractive, under-addressed market here, and in the lower BC mainland. We can't afford to rest on our laurels while other cities and counties gear up to serve that market. We've got to move quickly with our own plans."

April 14, 1982: **Not So Fast, Says Citizen Group**

John Kearn, owner of Jackman's Towing, and a frequent city hall observer, raised objections to the city's plans to build and finance a large parking garage. "Why should the public have to underwrite a private developer's profit line? I think efforts to enhance the downtown are fine, but I see no reason the citizens should pay $15 million to do it. Not everyone wants to save the downtown. If the private side can't carry the venture on it's own merits, maybe it shouldn't happen at all." Kearn is organizing a new citizen's group, "Keep It Simple" (KIS), to oppose the Mayor's and the Planning Director's plans for subsidized parking improvements.

### April 20, 1982: **Kearn's Group Gains Momentum**

John Kearn and other KIS workers have begun circulating a petition that would require an initiative on this November's ballot, testing the city's right to use public funds to construct a large parking garage downtown. "I think we ought to ask the voters," says Kearn.

### May 27, 1982: **City Officials Struggle to Meet $15 Million Parking Garage Bill**

Jean Grannis, Director of Community Development for the City of Billington, explained an involved plan to finance downtown parking improvements requested of the city by the Sandhem, Inc., development firm. Seven million dollars would come from a general obligation bond, which would be a nonvoted, or "councilmatic" bond. Some $675,000 would be contributed by the developer, a new agreement. Local sales tax would be increased by 1/2 cent per dollar spent, and the expected revenue increase could be borrowed against. A federal grant, under the UDAG program, will be sought, and a new state grant tool for community redevelopment, which is up for passage on this November's ballot, also could be employed.

Most of these loans will be secured in city revenues from the sales tax and B&O taxes. "The majority of these bonds will pay themselves back by the increase in business," maintains Grannis. "We saw $40 million in retail sales downtown in 1981. The conservative estimate for the first year of the new downtown, when completed, is $62 million. Subsequent years should be even stronger."

### June 15, 1982: **Fairview Mall Plans Resurface**

Alru/LaVoy, the third largest developer of suburban shopping malls in the U.S., today announced its intention to revive plans for a 665,000-square-foot enclosed regional mall in northern Skokie County, just 18 miles south of Billington. Alru/LaVoy dropped these plans late last winter after two years of increasingly high lending rates, which made the project unfeasible. Now, said company representatives, the financial climate has improved, and the time is right for Fairview Mall to become a reality.

### July 1, 1982: **It's a Horse Race Now, Warns Hart**

Ken Hart, Mayor of Billington, urged citizens to set aside their differences and unite in the effort to improve retail shopping downtown. "Billington Mall is the most important project in the city, and it will be the salvation of the retail trade community. We cannot afford to waste any more valuable time," Hart exhorted.

## "Headlines" Tier 2: Newspaper Accounts of the Situation

The events and quotes you are about to read have been substantially altered. They should not be regarded as historic fact.

### November 10, 1982: **Election Results: Prop One Passes, Barely**

Billington voters decided Tuesday by a scant 51 to 49 percent majority to prevent any future City Council actions on parking improvement subsidies without citizen approval. "We're ecstatic" said John Kearn, leader of KIS, a citizen group that promoted passage of Prop One. "It's ridiculous; this is overkill," said Mayor Ken Hart. "Virtually all parking improvements in the city will now cease or be indefinitely delayed by waiting for elective approval. This is government by initiative, and it's unworkable."

### November 11, 1982: **Sandhem, Inc., Leaving Billington; Downtown Rehab Dreams Dissolve**

A bitter Brian Gundel announced to a subdued gathering of downtown merchants today that Sandhem, Inc., is ceasing all efforts to construct the downtown Billington Mall. The project would have provided 500,000 square feet of enclosed, modern retail space in the existing downtown area, and about 300 new full-time jobs.

"Sandhem just can't afford this investment without the city's help on the cost of the parking garages," said Gundel, "and, unfortunately, they now feel the community is not united behind the importance of keeping retail downtown."

### November 20, 1982: **Abel Announces Plans to Seek Rezone for Old Nursery Site**

David Abel, president of the Trigon Development Corporation, said in a brief press announcement today that his firm will immediately seek a rezone for a 65-acre parcel his firm owns. The land is zoned agricultural now, but is ideally suited to development of a suburban regional mall, according to Abel and other industry experts.

"We are looking now for a strong national partner with mall development experience and good retail contacts," said Abel when reached by telephone this afternoon. "We stood aside to give downtown efforts every opportunity," commented Abel, "but it looks like the voters and the market have spoken. Now it's time to provide them with the retail shopping opportunities they prefer."

### December 1, 1982: **Community Development Director Quits**

Jean Grannis, City of Billington Community Development Director, tendered her resignation from that post, to be effective January first. "I'm going to consider other options," said Grannis. Grannis figured prominently in this year's attempts by the city to preserve its downtown retail core.

### February 15, 1983: **Mayor Not Going to Seek Reelection**

"It's time to step down," Ken Hart said today. "I've been in office eight years. It's time for someone else to have an opportunity." Hart said his decision was not in reaction to the recent failure of downtown revitalization efforts, despite speculation to the contrary. "Sure, I'm disappointed," said Hart, "but the community will pull together and make the best of it. I personally need some new challenges."

### March 25, 1983: **Trigon Pairs With Pontiac Progress**

David Abel announced today that his firm has selected Pontiac Progress of Pontiac, Michigan, to co-venture development of the old state nursery site into a new suburban regional mall. Abel and his firm, Trigon, are seeking a rezone from the Billington City Council to allow the new development to occur. The land is currently zoned agricultural.

"We feel extremely fortunate to have a partner of Pontiac's strength in this venture. The citizens of Billington can be assured of a first-rate project, with all the modern amenities. We're going to call it Bellaire. We hope the rezone will proceed quickly."

### April 10, 1983: **Grannis Hired by Trigon**

The Trigon Development Corporation announced that Jean Grannis will join their firm next month as Vice-President in Charge of Marketing. "We know Jean to be competent and aggressive," said David Abel, president of the firm. "We were very impressed with her efforts on behalf of the city last year. She will be a great addition to our team. We see no conflict-of-interest problems."

### July 20, 1983: **Fairview Mall Development Looking Likely**

Charles Brown, Mayor of Fairview in northern Skokie County, said today that the Alru/LaVoy development firm may be just a few weeks away from being able to announce the commitment of at least two large "major" department stores to the proposed Fairview Mall project. "If we get the commitment, Fairview will get its mall," said Mayor Brown.

When asked whether that spelled doom for the newly proposed Bellaire Mall north of the City of Billington, Mayor Brown answered, "No. Our information is that the two towns are in separate market areas. Both projects can proceed."

### July 28, 1983: **Mayor Hart Urges Action**

In a surprising reversal of position, outgoing Billington mayor, Ken Hart, urged the City Council to move quickly on the Trigon Corporation's request for a rezone of land north of Billington. "Major department stores are not going to locate in two new malls up here. They will go to one or the other. Since our efforts to build an urban mall seem to have stopped, we had better do what we can to keep the increased retail revenue at home. Even though development of the Trigon Bellaire project will have some negative effects on the CBD, the site is at least within the city limits. We can't allow this revenue to be lost to Fairview."

September 15, 1983: **Neighborhood Group Forms to Oppose Bellaire Rezone**

Citizen supporters of the existing comprehensive zoning plan of the City of Billington banded together today to begin a campaign against the Trigon Corporation's attempt to have a large parcel of land in the northern portion of the town rezoned from agricultural to retail. "We can't afford it," said spokesman Brian Gundel. "It's just that simple. What do we expect to do for the existing downtown if all the retail trade moves north to the Bellaire site? It would mean wholesale vacancies, and probably bankruptcy for a lot of smaller merchants who would not be able to afford the new rents."

October 15, 1983: **Trigon to Hire Hart**

Mayor Ken Hart disclosed today that he has accepted an offer of employment from the Trigon Development Corporation, effective early next January. He will become Vice-President in Charge of Projects. To avoid any potential conflict of interest, the Billington City Council has decided to defer all further discussions on the Bellaire rezone request until January, 1984, when Hart will no longer be in office.

November 1, 1983: **Group Calls for Mobilization**

Brian Gundel, organizer of a citizens' group, SOC, for "Save Our City," asks every Billington citizen who is concerned about the fate of downtown Billington to join the effort to stop the Bellaire rezone. "It would mean the end to everything we value in this community: independently owned small businesses, a safe downtown, a cohesive city plan. Why should we let someone from Michigan come in here and cart all the money away?"

December 20, 1983: **Council Schedules Overflow Meeting**

The Billington City Council set the first of several public hearings regarding the Bellaire rezoning for January 5, 1984. The meeting will be held in the Billington High School gym to allow for anticipated record crowds.

Trigon Corporation members, which will include two previous City of Billington officials by January, are readying their efforts for the presentations.

Save Our City (SOC) members are said to be conducting massive doorbelling efforts to raise public sentiment against the rezone.

## Bridging Activity for "Headlines": A Simulation— Developing an Educational Program for Billington

Now that you have participated in "Headlines" as a community member, step back into your other role as Extension educator and consider an educational program that could help Billington's citizens make an informed decision.

The worksheets that follow have two components. In the first component, analyze the situation in Billington. Use your experiences in the simulation to answer the questions about the existing and desired conditions surrounding the shopping area issue. Then build upon your situational analysis in the second worksheet to outline possible educational programs that would be of benefit to Billington.

**TOPIC**
**or AREA OF CONCERN:** Energizing Billington's economy through improved shopping areas

| SITUATION ANALYSIS | | |
|---|---|---|
| **EXISTING CONDITIONS** | | **DESIRED FUTURE CONDITIONS** |
| What individuals and families are affected by this topic? | How are individuals and families affected? | What would you like to accomplish through educational programs for individuals and families? |
| What groups and organizations are affected by this topic? | How are groups and organizations affected? | What would you like to accomplish through educational programs for groups and organizations? |
| What community decisionmakers are affected by this topic? | How are community decisionmakers affected? | What would you like to accomplish through educational programs for community decisionmakers? |

## POSSIBLE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

| FOR INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES | FOR GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS | FOR COMMUNITY DECISIONMAKERS |
|---|---|---|
| What educational programs should be delivered to individuals and families? | What do groups and organizations need to learn about the individual and family level? | What do community decisionmakers need to learn about individuals and families? |
| What do individuals and families need to learn about the organizational level? | What educational programs should be delivered to groups and organizations? | What do community decisionmakers need to learn about the organizational level? |
| What do individuals and families need to learn about the decisionmaking level? | What do groups and organizations need to learn about the decisionmaking process? | What educational programs should be delivered to community decisionmakers? |

—Prepared by David Deshler and Alan Hahn
adopted from Boyd and Others (1980)

## Evaluation: Unit V

Before concluding Unit V, take time to evaluate what you have learned about approaches to public policy education.

1. Use one (or a combination) of the approaches presented to describe the educational aspects of your topic.

2. What does the approach imply about program opportunities?

a. How much information will be needed?

b. Will the information you need be available?

c. Who would be affected?

d. Could you expect administrative support?

e. What questions remain unanswered?

f. How will it manage conflict over facts? Over values?

(If you are finding it hard to answer these questions, try a different method.)

**SAVE THIS INFORMATION**

## Final Evaluation of Module 6: Education for Public Decisions

In the preactivity assignment, you identified an issue in your community or state that has important public policy implications. At the end of each unit in this Module, you completed evaluating exercises in which you applied concepts, models, and so on, to that issue. Now, it is time for you to exploit all of this work.

Review your evaluation exercises and summarize them on paper. This summary will provide the background for the educational activities you will propose for your issue. It will now be your assignment to present the design of your educational program, using any models or methods (or combinations of them). This design is to be prepared as if it were to be a 15-minute presentation to your Extension administrators. You have the option of sending them information prior to the presentation. This could be background information or a copy of your presentation.

In completing this assignment, make the following assumptions:

1. The administrators who will listen to your presentation will read up to 10 double-spaced typed pages. Your presentation can take a different form from the information you send them prior to the meeting.

2. You will ask the administrators' advice as to whether or not you will proceed with an educational program. Try to anticipate their questions.

3. You will present a *design* (which implies that you will need to go beyond methods) for one or more educational events, but the design will be contingent on resources available, administrative support, and other factors. You are going to present your administrators with alternative designs and your judgment about the outcomes.

*An alternate way of completing this exercise.* If presenting your designs to your Extension administrators does not appeal to you, assume instead that the written document is a grant proposal, and that the presentation will be made to a grants committee.

**Working With Our Publics**
Module 6: Education for Public Decisions

# Selected Readings

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## Introduction

These Selected Readings provide a rich background for **Module 6: Education for Public Decisions.** Most have been abstracted into Fact Sheets in the Learners' Packet. Some are on videotapes. Ideas from each of them have been included to some degree in the Sourcebook. So the Selected Readings are mainly for enrichment. Why are they needed? How will they be useful?

For workshop leaders and classroom teachers:

- To gain the background to teach unfamiliar material (public policy) in a familiar context (Extension).
- To provide examples and details for presentations.
- To give learners extra credit options for critiques or analyses.
- To answer requests from colleagues who are working with issues.
- To use as references when counseling learners.

For learners:

- To increase your understanding of educating about public decisions.
- To have the videotapes on paper so you can take them with you
- To deal with questions raised by either study or experience.

This is a unique collection of papers. Most have not been published before, and the rest have been revised or updated. Here is why each is important.

The first thing people notice about Flinchbaugh's papers (and Barry himself for that matter) is their uniqueness. They are also full of practical wisdom and teaching recommendations. Hahn's paper takes us to a new plateau in social process models by explicitly including the opponents along with the advocates in his model.

The trio of papers on facts, myths, values, ethics, and the pitfalls of analysis are "must" reading for serious students of public policy education. They should probably be read in the order in which they are presented. Flinchbaugh's "Two Worms . . ." deals with facts, myths, and values. Hildreth and Johnson add the ethical dimension. Cordes helps identify analytical traps into which we easily step. Their subject matter is the most difficult in Module 6. If you teach this module in a classroom setting, these papers should probably be assigned reading.

"Issue Evolution and Educational Intervention" is my favorite presentation for in-service education or leadership development. This version of Gratto's model is easy for others to understand and, because it provides a transition between policymaking and policy education, is especially insightful to those in Family Community Leadership, wherein participants are expected to be both active citizens and educators. The California Group Decision Process can be very useful, but it is demanding of the facilitator; Wallace's paper makes it easier to apply. Last, the paper by Beth Moore reminds us that the context in which most Extension agents work does not allow them to specialize in functions to be served; they have multiple responsibilities to juggle, so they have to be clear about advocacy.

Publishing these papers removes Barry Flinchbaugh's monopoly of a great teaching trick. Now the rest of us can cleverly use his red and purple worms to impress those we teach and Barry will have to come up with a new "gimmick." Thanks, Barry.

Thank you to all of the authors of Selected Readings. These are important papers that will enhance the scholarship of Extension education.

—Verne W. House

# Who Makes Public Decisions? Who Sets Policy?

by **B. L. Flinchbaugh**

When our first-grade teacher or our kindergarten teacher taught us that all men are created equal, she was wrong. We have the phrase modernized today—all men and women are created equal. This is just not true. The Constitution guarantees equal opportunity, and we have made some progress in that direction. I am from Kansas. I have more representation in the U.S. Senate than the folks from Montana. And it is about time, because they "ran the show" for too long, with "ole" Mike Mansfield. We replaced him with Bob Dole. Since the Majority Leader determines the Senate's agenda, that is power, as well as unequal representation. We just switched from Montana to Kansas. I happen to think that is in the right direction, but the folks from Montana would argue with me on that. So, this one-person, one-vote principle is only a theory. It is a lofty principle that will never be perfected. We pay "lip service" to it. But, all men and women, in the establishment of public policy, are not created equal.

Let us look at the local level. Who makes public decisions? In Figure 1, influence is illustrated as a triangle: a local decisionmaking hierarchy. Think about who makes public decisions at the local level in your community, as we discuss the model.

At the very top of the triangle in Figure 1 are a few people whom we will call Kingmakers. Next in line, another group we will call Kings. The next level is the Actives. The next level is the Interested Citizens. Then, at the bottom of the triangle, is the largest group—the "don't give a damn bunch." There is a proper term for that group. The term is Apathetic Citizens. Every local community is informally organized in this manner.

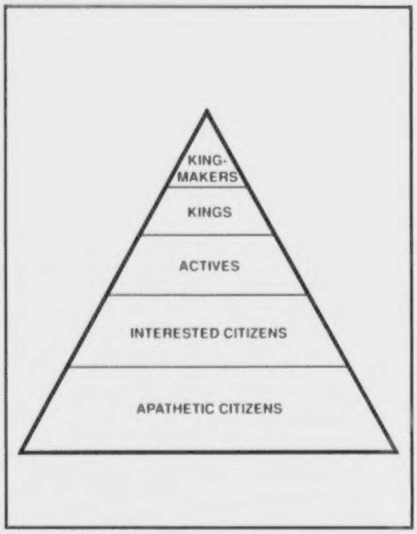

**Figure 1. Community influence triangle**

## Kingmakers

At the top of the hierarchy are two or three, or up to two dozen very influential persons, depending on the size of the community. And all public decisions that affect the local community finally are made by those very few Kingmakers. They "call the shots." This group basically has two characteristics—they possess financial and intellectual resources. Some of us have trouble accepting that it takes both characteristics to be a Kingmaker. But we all can identify some 40-year-old individual in our community whose father was a Kingmaker and was worth a lot of money. Yet, his son is nothing but the town playboy who contributes little to the community except spending the family fortune. So it takes more than money. In establishing public policy, being "dumb" is a handicap. Success in this endeavor requires more than financial resources. It takes intellectual resources. Extremely intelligent individuals will have some influence, but their influence will be less than the influence of those who are smart and have financial resources to implement their influence.

In every community there is a handful of people who are at the very top of this decisionmaking triangle, because they possess both financial resources and intellectual resources. These people operate behind the scenes; they are difficult to identify. Unless County Extension agents have been around their communities for a while, and have made a concerted effort to find out, they do not know who the local Kingmakers are. The Kingmakers rarely ever attend a Cooperative Extension meeting. But, if anything of substance happens at that meeting, within one-half hour after the meeting is over, they will know what was said and who said it. They are "tuned in" to the community.

It is a myth that Kingmakers represent the status quo. They have their "ear to the ground," and they will attempt to guide public opinion. They will attempt to steer the winds of change in the direction they want them to blow. But they also highly value their status as Kingmakers. And, if that wind reaches gale force, even though they do not like the direction it takes, they will go along with it, because the last thing they want to be is an ex-Kingmaker. They will use all their power to get that wind to blow in the right direction, but if they cannot change the direction of the wind, they eventually will jump on and ride it out. Kingmakers do not represent the status quo. Frequently, they have the community's interest in mind. They like to attain the point where their own self-interest and the community's interest are identical. If they can attain that stance, they have arrived. On most public issues, Kingmakers come out on the same side, as far as the body politic in the community is concerned. They make sure of that. They know that, over the course of their lifetime, they had better pay attention to community interests. And those interests do change.

The procedure is just like the legislature, for example. Our civics teacher taught us that legislators have committee meetings; then, the committees recommend to the entire legislature. Anybody can get on the list and testify. This is democracy in action. Go to Washington, for example, and sit in the U.S. Senate gallery and watch one senator on the floor talking to himself, for the record. To witness this can be awfully disillusioning. No public decisions are made on the floor of the legislature, or even in committee meetings of any legislature in the nation, or the U.S. Congress. More public decisions are made in hotel rooms, in capital cities, than are under the Capitol dome. The Kingmakers show up at the hotels.

Let us take as an example a typical rural town of 5,000 to 10,000 people—a county seat town. Who are the Kingmakers? Can you identify them? Frequently, they can be identified by position—bankers, lawyers, businessmen, well-established successful farmers, retired statesmen, medical doctors, funeral directors, judges, or publishers. If someone claims to be a Kingmaker, rest assured he or she is not. Conversely, the more vehement the denial, the more likely the person is a Kingmaker. Influential people do not put their influence on public display.

Ministers and school teachers are two interesting groups to analyze. In 1900, ministers and school teachers in small communities were quite influential. But both of those professions have declined in prestige. We could debate why for hours. It is obvious, at least where I have traveled, that they have lost influence. My explanation for this loss is that ministers and school teachers have publicly intruded into areas where they have no expertise. The teaching profession has become less of a profession and more of a trade union, which decreases its prestige. Ministers have moved from theology to sociology and economics. As ministers became very active in the upheavals of the 1960s, they lost prestige. The church groups became part of the power structure. I do not find many of them any more in that role. Today, ministers and school teachers are in the Actives group. They are very much involved in and very much a part of the community, and have some influence. Eventually, if they can get the wind to blow in one direction, and it gets to gale force, then the Kingmakers will go along. I do not think you will find as many ministers and school teachers in the Kingmaker category today as there were 25 to 30 years ago and, especially, in 1900.

In a small town, in the Midwest at least, in 1900, a very typical Kingmaker was the local funeral director and the furniture maker. And they were the same person. If a craftsman could build caskets out of pine, he also could build furniture—it was a very common combination. And, usually, there was one funeral director and furniture maker per community. They ended up at the top of the hierarchy. Both items were needed—caskets and furniture. Rarely is the funeral director and the furniture maker the same individual anymore. Today, furniture and caskets are made in large factories. Because of changing economics, some funeral directors are still at the top of the influence triangle, but not any furniture makers. So "who" is "where" changes with the times.

## Kings

The Kings are the group that most people think are in charge in the community. Without an understanding of community leadership, the Kings are the ones we think are the local leadership. They are out front. They often attend Cooperative Extension meetings. When they do, introduce them! Do not give them the platform, necessarily, but introduce them, because the bread of life for a politician is recognition. They almost prefer bad publicity to no publicity. So introduce them; pay them their due. They are the public officeholders, the local leadership. Each one owes his or her position to a Kingmaker. That is why the terms Kings and Kingmakers are used. The Kingmakers make the Kings. Behind every public officeholder is a Kingmaker. Some rural towns are so small that, occasionally, the King and the Kingmaker are the same person, because they just do not have enough people to go around. On occasion, a Kingmaker will hold public office, but that is rare. Kingmakers usually have the Kings out front.

The Kings pay their dues. In Manhattan, Kansas, for example, they move from volunteer community leadership, to the city council, to the school board, to the legislature, into the judiciary, perhaps, or even statewide office. But they have to "earn their spurs," if they are going to hold public office. The Kings owe their position to the Kingmakers. And, if Kings are to be successful, they do not get on "the wrong side" of the Kingmakers. If Kings disobey the Kingmakers, at least on the "big" issues, they become ex-Kings. A few Kings eventually have become Kingmakers. After they retire from office, they become statesmen. And the Kingmakers who made them have gone on to their highest reward—they are dead. So then, the King may eventually move into that position. But the two go hand in hand. They are very much a team. The Kings are out in front—the local leadership. The Kingmakers are behind the scenes, and they "call the shots."

It is very interesting where women fit into this hierarchy. Twenty-five years ago, few women would have been either in the King or Kingmaker role in the community. In fact, until a few decades ago, the only way a woman could get in the Kingmaker role in a small town was when her successful Kingmaker husband died young.

There is a little town in western Kansas, a county seat, that has a population of about 2,500 people. It is a matriarchal town run by one woman. She is 79 years old. She is in charge of the bank she owns. Her husband was a very successful banker who died unexpectedly at age 55. She is in charge—no policy is established in that town without her blessing. When she became aware that I was using her as an example in class, she wrote me the sternest letter I have ever read. She vehemently denied the charge. "Me, all I do is mind my own business, and I am in favor of whatever is in the best interest of

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this town." In my reply to her letter, I told her that one of the things that I tell the class is that the more Kingmakers deny it, the more likely they are to be Kingmakers. She and I met one evening, and we had a delightful discussion. Finally, I said, "Harriet, am I all wet, or not?" She smiled and said, "You are on the right track." She "calls the shots." So, in those days, the only way for a female to get to the top was through the death of her husband. But that has changed.

Kingmakers now are annointing female Kings. Now, do you think those "good ole boys" wanted to do that? Hell, no! But, the winds of change have blown so fast that they have to do it. And so, now, women are working into the hierarchy.

## Actives

The next group in the community triangle is the Actives. In this group are the "doers," the people who make the community "tick." They belong to the service clubs, such as the Lions Club and the Rotary Club; the P.T.A.; or other community groups, such as the Scouts or 4-H clubs. The Actives operate the local charities and direct the local fund drives. Fund after fund after fund, and these people do it. Some of them will move from the Actives group into the Kings and maybe, eventually, even into the Kingmakers group; but few of them will reach the top.

## Interested Citizens

Next in the community triangle is the Interested Citizens group. And notice each group gets larger in size as we move down the hierarchy. Interested Citizens watch the "Today" show and the evening news; they go to cocktail parties; read the daily newspaper; and keep somewhat informed on public issues. They are interested, and they will talk about public issues. But they are too busy to get involved. These Interesteds are typical suburbanites with a good job, a nice house, maybe two cars, very much interested, but they simply think they do not have time to become active in the community.

## Apathetic Citizens

The next, and last, group in the community triangle is the Apathetics group. The Apathetics are not interested; they simply do not care. They are busy all week earning enough money to meet their basic needs, and they relax on weekends. The Apathetics rarely discuss public issues. In their minds, they have many more important things to do than worry about public issues.

There is a way to move this Apathetic group to the Active group. Just build a new highway through their front yard. Or, with farmers, propose a reclamation project. Put a new reservoir in the county and propose to flood their farmland. They immediately move from the Apathetic to the Active group. Once that issue is settled, whether they win or lose, they move right back down to being Apathetics again.

The hierarchy of influence in the establishment of public policy changes issue by issue. The Kingmakers and the Kings —the few—are most stable, and tend to transcend issues. The Kings, the public officeholders, are subject to public vote on issues. So are the Kingmakers. But the rest of the hierarchy, the largest proportion of the local population, tends to change with issues. Some people are more interested in abortion, for example, than they are in economic development. And when they are directly affected, when the status quo is threatened, some of them will move from Apathetics to Actives. Think back to your local community; concentrate on it. Certainly, you can see this occurring.

## Power Clusters and the Influence Triangle

We have discussed who makes public policy at the local level. Let us now move up the ladder, or down the ladder, depending on how you view it, to state and national levels. I am going to use what is called Ogden's Power Cluster Theory, developed by Dan Ogden (1971), who has been in and out of government and in and out of higher education, and has a wealth of experience. Dan argues that we make public policy through a series of power clusters. Power clusters tend to occur around occupations, geographic regions, subject areas, issues, and fads. There are, for example, power clusters in education, agriculture, defense, labor, and manufacturing. Power clusters evolve around issues, e.g., environmental and religious issues. Likewise, in geographic areas—the East, the frost belt, the sun belt, and the old North and South. Power clusters tend to form around an area of interest. The influence triangle of Kings, Kingmakers, Actives, and Apathetics exists within each power cluster.

Power clusters are nonpartisan. In terms of making public policy, political parties basically are assumed to be ineffective. They have almost no influence anymore on public policy. Political parties exist primarily to elect candidates. How many people do you know who ever read a political party platform? Does the platform influence how people vote? Most candidates do not know what is in their party platform; they have never read it. Political parties exist today to provide the machinery to elect candidates. They do not set public policy. Power clusters have in them members of the bureaucracy, representatives of administrative and legislative agencies. They also have in them influential citizens, professionals, an attentive public, and a latent public.

Notice the similarity between some of those words and what we were discussing in the influence triangle at the local level—influential citizens (Kingmakers); administrative and legislative agencies, the bureaucracy plus the elected officials (the Kings); professionals (the Actives); the attentive public (the Interested Citizens); and the latent public (the Apathetics). Power clusters tend to be issue, subject, geographic area, and occupational communities. And within each power cluster, there basically exists an influence triangle.

People who are involved usually remain in a power cluster for a lifetime. Around Washington, D.C., is a beltway that is populated with consulting firms. Where are many members of the Carter administration today—for example, the Chief USDA Economist? They are in consulting firms on the beltway. What will happen in 1988, if the Republicans get kicked out and the Democrats are elected? Those power cluster professionals on the beltway who are Democrats and who served Johnson, Kennedy, and Carter will move downtown into government offices. And the Reagan professionals will move out to the beltway. Then, in 1992, if the Democrats get kicked out and the Republicans go back in, a reshuffle will occur.

Reagan's Chief Agricultural Economist and Carter's Chief Agricultural Economist know each other well, and speak together probably weekly. They are influential professional members of the agriculture power cluster. And that cluster is nonpartisan. All the political party does is determine where their office is—either on the beltway or downtown on the mall. They are part of a fraternity, if you please. Presidents come and go; they are tolerated. Secretaries of Agriculture come and go; they are tolerated. But the professionals remain. And that is how their influence is exerted. You can always tell, at Purdue University, which political party is in power. When the Republicans are in power, the Purdue Agricultural Economics staff is raided. Even the Dean was in Washington. When the Democrats come in power, the faculty comes back to Purdue. Don Paarlberg just moved back and forth. Earl Butz just moved back and forth. They are part of a permanent power cluster; they are there for a lifetime. The arrangement is nonpartisan, and organized basically on the Kingmaker and King theory.

When an issue concerns only one power cluster, its solution is arrived at through compromise and debate, within the cluster. If the issue concerns only the members of one power cluster and does not affect other clusters, it is settled within the power cluster. Legislators frequently admonish members of a power cluster, "What do you want? Get your act together. What is the solution to this problem? Don't come to us with six different solutions; get together and solve the problem yourselves. Bring us the solution, and we will introduce it and we will pass it." This procedure works as long as it does not affect another cluster. This is one of the biggest problems we have had in agriculture, because farm organizations cannot even agree on the issues. I have heard congressmen say many times to farm organizations, "Make up your minds. How can we represent you when you do not know what you want? Settle it within first."

When an issue affects more than one power cluster, there has to be compromise between or among the affected power clusters—for example, a profitable agriculture versus an abundant supply of food; or high farm income versus cheap food. Farmers frequently lament our cheap food policy. The agriculture power cluster has been penetrated by nonfarm, special-interest groups. The consumer movement may be a cluster of its own, but when it comes to food policy it is assimilated into the agriculture power cluster. Traditional agriculturalists are sharing power with the consumer groups in terms of establishing food policy. At least there has to be compromise between the two clusters, consumer and agriculture, if you want to make the argument that they are separate clusters. Because the consumer power cluster is very much involved in setting food policy, I would argue that the two power clusters are somewhat joined today. If the issue can be settled within the cluster, the decision is made there. If the issue affects another cluster, there has to be compromise between clusters.

The transportation power cluster always has a battle going on with energy—between railroads and truckers. The transportation power cluster has been at it long enough, and they understand it well enough, that they normally will settle their battle within. And when they move to the legislative system and into the political arena, they have to deal with other power clusters, and they "have their act together."

Labor is always at odds with the manufacturing power cluster. And labor is losing today. Why? Because they do not settle the issue within first. When George Meany was in charge of American labor, differences were settled within. Now, there is a case of Kingmaker and King being the same person. George Meany was in charge. And when George said it was black, it was black; when George said it was white, it was white. When he died, look what happened to the labor power cluster. It is still fighting over who will take George's place. I maintain that this "in-fighting" had as much to do with the decline of organized labor's influence as the recession. Organized labor does not have leadership. It does not have a group of Kingmakers or a King within the system who can make it run. So, the labor power cluster has declined in terms of influence.

Upheaval occurs when an outsider is thrown into a power cluster. Ronald Reagan's Cabinet is a perfect example. Reagan chose persons outside the power clusters to run the various agencies. The prime example is former Interior Secretary, James Watt, who was totally outside the environmental-interior power cluster. The power cluster decided the day Watts was appointed that they were going to "get him." Many of the difficulties that former Secretary of Agriculture John Block faced were due to the fact that he did not come through the ranks. Block, who was part of the agriculture power cluster, but at a very low level, was plucked out of there and moved all the way to the King category. And, the Kingmakers had not annointed him.

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To make the system work, people move up through the hierarchy. People are appointed to the top jobs from the power cluster, and then it will work. Carter was another good example; he brought the "Georgia crowd" to Washington, and they were like fish out of water. They had little Washington experience and they had not worked their way through the power cluster. When persons are chosen from outside the power cluster and move in, they are in trouble before they begin. The power cluster is absolutely convinced that they cannot do the job, or that they are the enemy, because they did not work their way through the ranks of the power cluster.

The United States is a republic, not a democracy. In a republic, people are elected and appointed to lead. We elect people on the basis of their character, integrity, and their positions on issues. They then guide and lead public opinion. In a democracy, we elect people to represent us. In the modern age, I really do not see any need to elect anybody if we are going to a pure democracy. All we need to do is turn the job over to George Gallup; let him gauge public opinion; and then make decisions. The old New England town meeting concept was pure democracy. They did not elect anybody. Everybody went to meetings and voted on every issue. Well, that is not practical, so we started electing representatives.

For 200 years, we have argued, "Are we a republic or a democracy?" I am arguing that we are basically a republic; that we elect people to lead. We elect people to guide public opinion. There are those occasions when what is in the best interest of the power structure also is in the best interest of the community. In my experience, that occurs more often than most people would admit—the two are not always divergent. The public interest and the power cluster interest frequently are synonymous. On those big issues in which they are not, the power cluster frequently has to yield. If public opinion gets so strong, if the winds reach gale force, the power cluster is not going to change public opinion.

The defense issue is a good example of this latter point. When Reagan became President, he obviously intended to build a strong defense to show a strong offense to the Russians. During his term of office, he has roughly doubled the defense budget. Has his mind changed on the necessity of a strong defense? Has his mind changed on the necessity of spending billions and billions on defense? No! But, what happened? Public opinion is changing. The defense power cluster is losing. Reagan's own party is going to abandon him on that issue. So, eventually, the public interest has a way of working its will on big issues. The power clusters then change, as the people within the clusters change their position. The number one goal of most people high up in the hierarchy is to maintain that position; they will. The President will swallow tax increases, eventually, to decrease the deficit. Do you think he has changed his mind on tax increases? No. Public opinion will force it. So the system does work. It is cumbersome and slow. I agree with Winston Churchill's statement to the effect that democracy is a terrible form of government, but the best ever devised by mankind.

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# Stages in the Decisionmaking Process

By **Alan Hahn**

On the surface, there appears to be little similarity in the way various issues, such as school busing controversies, public employees' strikes, battles over abortion, or opposition to nuclear power plants, are raised, debated, and resolved. But, underlying the apparent varitation is a regularity of events and actions required by the very nature of the process of public decisionmaking. The resolution of public issues responds to the fact that different people are affected in different ways. Consequently, they will disagree about what should and should not be done. Public decisionmaking—politics, in other words—is distinguished by the fact that, normally, decisions are reached, in spite of conflicting interests and preferences. The common elements of a process that includes conflict, but ultimately must reach a single decision, are summarized in Figure 2. Such a list of stages will be especially helpful for newcomers to the public decisionmaking arena. Each stage in the decisionmaking process, shown in Figure 2, is summarized briefly in the sections that follow.

## Problem Recognition

Most public decisionmaking begins with the recognition of a problem in one or more of the routines of government or other organizations that provide services. In some cases, participants may be inspired by a goal or image of the way things "ought to be," but decisionmaking processes more often are reactions to perceived problems, injustices, or inconveniences. We refer to the initiators of a decisionmaking process as the advocates.

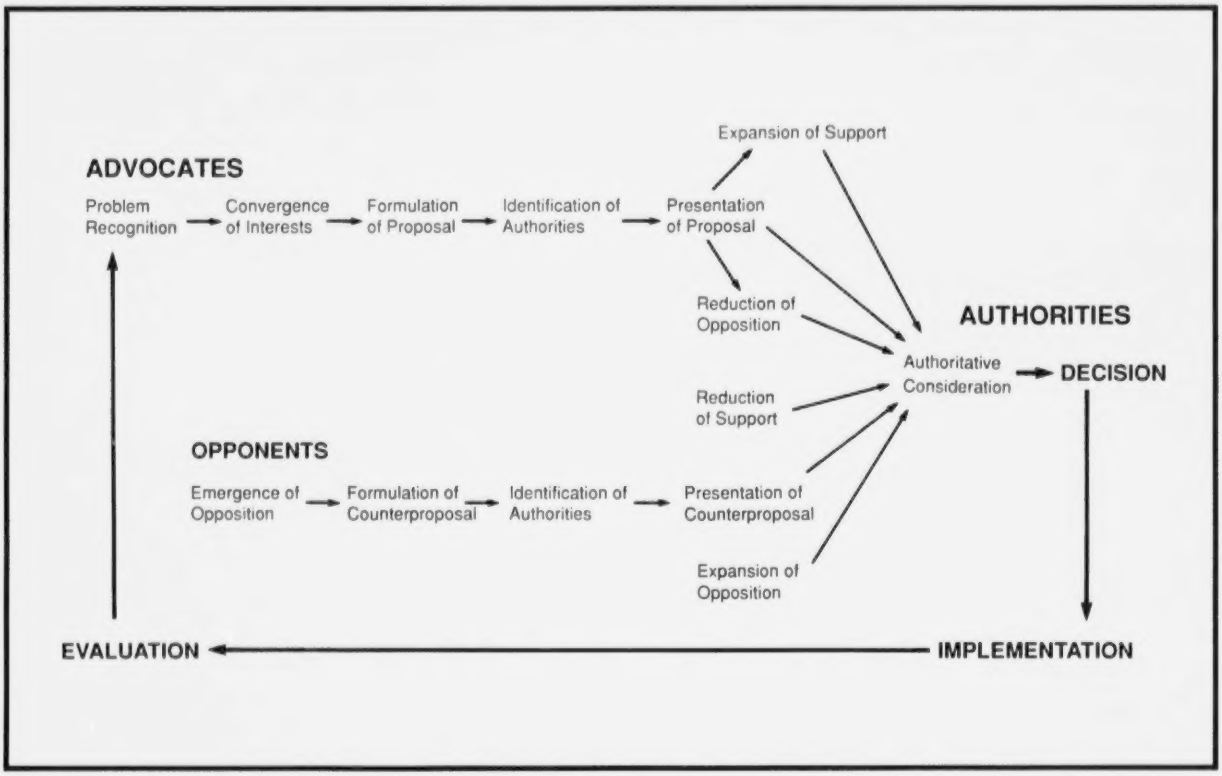

Figure 2. Stages in the decisionmaking process

Problem recognition most often occurs among the administrative personnel of governmental or other organizations that provide services. In some cases, movement through subsequent stages of the process may remain largely invisible—hidden from public view within governmental institutions and other service organizations. Much of what we think of as problem recognition, and read and hear about in the news media, is actually reactions against proposals already initiated. The opposition of the parents to the school administration's proposals to close certain schools is a case in point. Such reactions appear later in the present model and are discussed under the heading of opposition.

It is also possible that local elected officials, state or federal officials, citizens' groups, business firms, or other participants besides administrative personnel, may recognize problems and become the advocates in a decisionmaking process. They may, at times, raise issues that are more threatening to administrative personnel than issues that the latter themselves would raise. In the problem-recognition stage, issues may be suppressed, in the sense that prevailing values and beliefs can discourage people from even perceiving certain situations as problems.

## Convergence of Interests

The raising of an issue requires that people not only recognize a problem, but also perceive it as "political," that is, one for which it is appropriate to expect collective or governmental solutions. The likelihood of such a perception is influenced, in part, by prevailing patterns of beliefs and values. Issues are sometimes suppressed because, even though the problem is recognized, it is considered a matter of personal responsibility. In addition to interpreting a problem as political, people also require some hope for success. Perceptions of potential participants about the need for involvement and the likelihood of success also are subject to manipulation by the actions and statements of people and organizations that benefit from the suppression of certain issues.

One major way people come to perceive their problems as political, and efforts to do something about them as worthwhile, is by getting together with others. When people get together, or are brought together by community organizers to identify and discuss problems, a common reaction is surprise and elation that so many others have the same experiences and see things the same way. They have the same complaints about medical services, for example—the same feelings of confusion, fear, humiliation, or whatever, and the same infuriating inability to get any response or satisfaction when they complain. That process clearly plays an important role in persuading people, first, that their problems are not strictly personal and, second, that successful influence might be possible.

It is possible that the shift from problem recognition to convergence of interest will never occur. The process can break down at any stage. Those with prior political experiences are likely to think immediately of searching for potential allies and supporters, when they recognize a problem. For less experienced participants, the convergence of interest is likely to be more haphazard. The news media can play a key role in this process, through informing potential participants about ongoing efforts, thereby enabling different groups to get together or unaffiliated people to find relevant groups to join. On the other hand, the media also can impede mobilization, as Gaventa (1980, p. 106) shows in describing the failure of a coal miners' strike in the Clear Fork Valley in 1931–32:

> First, the information [presented by the local newspaper] tended to isolate leaders from workers [by describing union officials] as manipulating or misleading the miners?. Second, the information tended to report only isolated instances of conflict. The extent of the strike was played down?. Third, the local information minimized the extent of the support for the strike from elsewhere [for example, not mentioning a sympathy march in New York City].

For administrative personnel and other "insiders," the convergence of interests is not likely to be problematic. In a few cases, such convergence may not even be necessary. A particular individual may recognize a problem and have sufficient authority to correct it on his or her own. More often, even among insiders, several people need to identify the same problem before the decisionmaking process can move forward. But checking for such agreement is normally an easy and automatic process.

## Formulation of a Proposal

When dissatisfied people find their interests shared by others and begin talking together, they may gradually translate their perceptions of problems into proposals for action or specific suggestions of things that "ought to be done." Such a translation will be necessary before the authorities—those whose decisions will be necessary to solve the problem—can be expected to take action. In a few cases, elected officials or other decisionmakers may actively seek out problems or concerns to respond to; but, more often, they respond to fairly detailed and specific proposals developed by others.

The formulation of proposals also is far easier for some participants than others. Administrative personnel and other experienced participants may have less trouble turning problems into ideas for solutions. Certainly, there are exceptions—problems that seem to defy solutions, even for the experts. However, on many occasions, ideas for solutions are so close at hand that separate steps are not even required; problems and solutions will be thought of simultaneously.

In some cases, especially among less-experienced participants, the proposal formulation stage may not be completed. Devising positive, constructive, feasible, and politically acceptable proposals is not easy, especially when the assistance of attorneys, planners, engineers, and specialists in specific problem areas is not available. Furthermore, the phenomenon of nondecisionmaking can be at work here, too.

Alternative solutions can be suppressed in exactly the same way as recognition of problems. Prevailing values and beliefs may make it unlikely that some alternatives will be thought of in the first place. And, even if they are thought of, they are likely to be rejected as improper to advocate or doomed to failure. In the United States, alternatives that involve major expansions of governmental activity, redistribution of wealth, or restraints on free enterprise often are pointed out as examples of suppressed alternatives.

If suitable proposals to deal with a recognized problem cannot be formulated, the decisionmaking process may end. Another possibility—at this point, or at any other stage in the process—is a "foldback" or reversion to an earlier stage. Advocates may go back to the first stage and redefine the problem so that a proposed solution is possible, or to the second stage for some adjustment in the "mix" of people who have gotten together—for example, so that only those who can agree on a certain proposal will continue the process.

## Development of Strategy

In the strategy development stage, advocates determine how to express their proposal in terms that can be accepted and supported by the necessary individuals and groups, and adopted by the appropriate authorities. At least two steps are involved in the development of strategy. First, identify the appropriate authorities for the issue in question. In many cases, this is a legal matter. In my community, for example, the Board of Zoning Appeals had the authority to grant or deny the variance that Planned Parenthood requested to expand its facilities. The county legislative body had the authority to construct a new jail and choose a suitable location for it within the county. These decisions could not be made legally by anyone else.

In other cases, the question of who has the authority to make certain decisions may be less a legal matter than a matter of custom or "unofficial" influence, or simply of someone wanting to do something and knowing that it is not against the law. It was in the latter sense that Planned Parenthood had the authority to decide to provide abortion services. In the same way, a business firm may be the authority for the decision to provide day-care services for its employees, or a wealthy individual may be the authority for a decision to finance the purchase of a historic landmark.

Most issues of any significance are likely to require, not a single decision, but many decisions; and the authority for each decision may lie with different individuals, organizations, or governing bodies. For example, construction of a housing project is likely to require a decision to undertake the project by a private developer; a zoning variance from the board of zoning appeals; an agreement by the city council to provide water, sewerage, and other services; approval of funding from a federal agency; and a variety of other affirmative decisions. Separate strategies must be developed to influence each authority, as each will have differing interests.

Once the appropriate authorities have been identified, the second step in developing a strategy is to decide what actions will maximize the likelihood that the authorities will make the desired decisions. Questions the advocates need to answer at this point include:

- What are the interests of the authorities, not only on this particular issue, but also overall interests, goals, and desires?
- Is our proposal compatible with their interests?
- If not, can we change our interests, or the way they perceive their interests?
- Will support from other individuals and groups help influence the authorities?
- If so, what will we do to obtain their support?
- Is there anything we can do to minimize any opposition that might otherwise influence the authorities in ways contrary to our interests?

If such questions can be answered, strategies can be outlined for the next few stages. Again, of course, the process may break down or revert to earlier stages. In identifying the appropriate authorities and assessing the possibilities of gaining their assent, the advocates may conclude that there is no chance of seeing their proposals adopted. They may give up completely, or go back to an earlier stage—for example, to reformulate their proposal in hopes of increasing its acceptability to the authorities, its attractiveness to potential supporters, or its likelihood of minimizing or withstanding opposition.

Participants differ in their knowledge base, established contacts, and familiarity with strategy planning. Insiders and other experienced participants often think automatically in strategic terms. Knowing who needs to be involved and what needs to be done is "second nature." People who have limited political experience may find it difficult to determine who are the appropriate authorities; what their interests are; what potential supporters they are likely to listen to; what opposition is likely to occur; and what difference it will make. These and other key considerations in strategy development may be considerably more difficult to answer.

Participants also differ in the inherent difficulty of the obstacles that their strategy needs to overcome. Compared to the difficulties facing experienced participants, those with less experience are already unlikely to be respected by the authorities, to have friendships and mutual obligations already established with influential supporters, or to have reputations that discourage opposition. Furthermore, because of the disadvantaged position from

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which they start, they are more likely to be asking for larger, more unusual, and threatening changes.

## Expansion of Support

Some proposals will be immediately acceptable to the authorities. Even if they are not, some advocates may by sufficiently influential by themselves that they do not need additional support. For most advocates, the expansion of support is likely to be another necessary stage. The object will be to generate, solicit, or organize whatever support is believed necessary to persuade the authorities to make the desired decisions. The needed support might take the form of endorsements from respected individuals or groups, large numbers of followers to demonstrate the popularity of one's position, information, money, legal assistance, or other resources. Securing such support might involve circulating leaflets or petitions, ringing doorbells, printing political ads, or holding mass meetings. It may require phone calls or visits to influential people; and is likely to involve negotiations, bargains, and compromises with those whose support is sought.

Concessions may have to be made, or agreements may have to be made to provide support for others, in the future, in return for their support on a current issue. In some cases, support for others on past issues can be "cashed in." Among less-experienced participants, the seeking of support may be a trial-and-error process in which many potential supporters are approached with little or no understanding of where support is most or least likely. General strategies that publicize an issue broadly to promote support also may be used.

In general the more advocates rely on others for support, the more concessions they are likely to have to make. Potential supporters, whose help is crucial, can refuse to offer support at all, unless the advocates' proposal is modified in accordance with their wishes. In extreme cases, advocates may completely lose control of the issues they have raised. Such an outcome is especially likely in the case of groups that use disruption as a tactic for calling attention to issues, and for convincing the authorities that some kind of action is necessary. In such cases, the authorities are likely to consult with other established participants and various moderate groups in deciding how to respond; but the disruptive groups themselves may be excluded from the negotiations.

Is it possible that support will not be available at all? In this case, the process may break down or revert to an earlier stage.

## Reduction of Opposition

Opposition to advocates' proposals can affect the authorities' decisions, at least as much in unfavorable directions as supporters can in favorable ones. In some cases, the reduction of opposition might involve face-to-face conversation, persuasion, or negotiation with potential opponents. More often, it involves indirect efforts to anticipate opposition and its impact. Advocates might then modify their proposal to remove or "tone down" the most controversial aspects. Alternatively, certain arguments might be strengthened to withstand anticipated opposition, or efforts might be made to discredit the opposition and its arguments in the eyes of the authorities or potential supporters.

Participants vary as much in their ability to reduce opposition as in their ability to expand support. Again, insiders and other established participants often have a decided advantage over less experienced participants. The same conditions and techniques that insiders can use to discourage the raising of issues, in the first place, also can be used to discourage opposition.

## Presentation of Proposal

At the proposal presentation stage, advocates attempt to place their proposal on the authorities' formal agenda. They hope that the authorities will find the proposal acceptable—or, at least, that they can be persuaded to do so by the advocates' expanded support or reduced opposition. In actual practice, many advocates do not wait until this stage to establish contact with the authorities. If they have any "political savvy" at all, they have at least "sounded out" the authorities earlier in the process, and may even have developed their proposal in conjunction with the authorities—or at least have checked ideas with them and sought their advice.

Once again, it is clear that participants vary widely in their degree of access to the authorities and the extent to which the authorities already view them as credible and worthy of respect. The possibilities range from situations where the authorities are absolutely hostile, to situations where the people who initially recognize a problem have in their own hands the authority necessary to resolve it. As in all of the other stages, if the proposal presentation cannot be completed, the process may end, or revert to an earlier stage. In some cases, it may be possible to develop a new strategy—perhaps also requiring a reformulation of the proposal, thereby circumventing uncooperative authorities by having the necessary decisions made elsewhere.

## Opposition Activities

As noted earlier, some issues are not controversial; they generate no opposition. Many issues, at least the more highly publicized ones, do become matters of conflict. The activities of the opponents of advocates' proposals are represented in the middle portion of Figure 2. When issues are initially raised by administrative personnel or other established participants, their ability to keep decisionmaking hidden from public view can minimize the likelihood of opposition. On the other hand, when "outsiders" are the advocates, opposition may be particularly likely, if only from the "insiders" who do not wish to change their routines. But insiders can be willing to correct problems identified by outsiders, and may do so with no protest or controversy. Proposals for change made by outsiders are sometimes opposed by other outsiders—as, for example, when parents affiliated with religious groups demand the reinstatement of prayers in school, and other parents object. Finally, it is also true that issues raised by insiders and kept quiet and largely invisible sometimes "leak" anyway, and become matters of open controversy.

Opposition can occur at any stage of the decisionmaking process, but is less likely in the early stages, since the advocates' activity tends to remain fairly inconspicuous. It may not be until proposals are actually formulated or strategy planning sessions are held—or even later—that potential opponents are alerted to what is happening and actually organize against the advocates.

As indicated in Figure 2, the opponents' activities parallel those of the advocates. The opponents formulate a counterproposal, which might be as simple as "Vote 'no' on the advocates' proposal," but could involve the development of a positive alternative. They also develop their own strategy for influencing the authorities, by trying to expand opposition in the same way the advocates try to expand support, or by trying to minimize or undermine or counteract support for the advocates' position. They also have to present their counterproposal to the authorities and get it on the formal agenda.

If opposition or conflict occur, two alternatives are possible. The conflicting groups may continue to compete with one another, with the authorities forced to resolve the issue, or the decisionmaking process may either end or revert to an earlier stage. The latter will occur, if the advocates conclude that they have no chance of winning—that, in the face of the opposition, they are unable to formulate a sufficiently attractive proposal to secure the necessary support, or to obtain a sympathetic or even neutral hearing from the authorities.

In general, opponents have a consistent advantage over advocates. Unless the status quo is completely intolerable, so that large numbers of people are convinced that *anything* would be better, opponents often need only raise doubts that a proposed change would work, or some plausible suspicion that it will make matters worse. Such doubts or suspicions may be enough to destroy the advocates' credibility, or to expand opposition sufficiently to convince the authorities to vote "no." Many people will be satisfied with a negative decision, since the status quo is familiar and they know it is tolerable. The advocates, by contrast, can counteract doubts and suspicions about their proposal only by succeeding in describing a theoretical situation in terms that are sufficiently graphic, attractive, and credible to convince people that it is worth the risk of giving up a status quo that is known to be tolerable.

Such an advantage for opponents is something that holds true only when "other things remain equal." And, of course, other things often are not equal. The status quo may not be tolerable. The advocates' position may be inherently more reasonable or sensible, or the advocates may have the preponderance of support of influential individuals and groups. In addition, the general advantage held by opponents also may be balanced, in part, by a few countervailing advantages that the opposition may create for the advocates. For example, it may strengthen the advocates' solidarity and determination; it may generate sympathy for the advocates; and opposition may backfire if it appears to be heavy-handed or overactive.

## Authoritative Consideration

Once an issue reaches the formal agenda, the authorities make their own deliberations. Depending on what transpired earlier, they will have either a single proposal to consider, or two or more contending proposals or counterproposals. The authorities will not necessarily be neutral. In their considerations, the authorities are likely to weigh a large number of factors, including:

- The specific demands of the contending groups;
- Actual or potential, expressed or unexpressed interests of other segments of the community;
- Other known or anticipated needs for funds and other scarce resources;
- Their values, principles, and judgments;
- Their sense of duty to do what is in the "public interest," or the interest of "business," "children," "the poor," or any other segment of the community for which they feel obligated; and
- An assessment of the effect any decision may have on their own reelection, career advancement, prestige, status, or other desired outcomes.

The authorities may decline to consider the issue—in which case, the process may end, or revert to an earlier stage.

## Decision

If the authorities agree to consider the issue, presumably they will arrive at some decision. They may approve the advocates' proposal, or the opponents' counterproposal, or they may reach a decision that serves as a compromise. The process can end or revert to an earlier stage, if the authorities refuse to act; table the proposal; ask for "further study"; or otherwise postpone their decision.

Once issues have reached the formal agenda, we are in the realm of more conventional politics. The conditions and techniques that keep issues from arising, or from reaching the agenda if they do arise, are no longer a concern. The

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ability to influence decisions is by no means equal, but at least the issues and competing positions are publicly visible.

Most issues are not resolved by a single decision. Changing previous routines and instituting new ones almost always require a number of different decisions by different authorities. Thus, a realistic model of the public decisionmaking process would have to be considerably more complex than illustrated in Figure 2. The process would branch at various points to influence more than one decision at the same time. Or, it might have various detours, as efforts to get one decision to turn out require that other decisions be made beforehand. Some decisions may get reversed before the issue is finally resolved. Others may have to be reconsidered as conditions change, or as new information comes to light.

## Implementation

Eventually, enough of the necessary decisions may be made to resolve the original issue. While each specific decision can be thought of as having its own implementation phase, for most purposes, it makes more sense to think of implementation as describing the new routines established by the resolution of the issue. Changes from previous routines may be great or small, depending upon what the advocates are demanding and how much they got. The ultimate decision may have been to refuse to concede to the advocates and to maintain the status quo. In such case, there will be no change from previous routines, except that the advocates may be more dissatisfied and may have gained allies and sympathizers. Such gains may have significant future impact. If changes in previous routines are made, the effects are not likely to be equal throughout the community. Some segments will be affected greatly, others not at all. Some will be helped; others may be hurt; and still others may be left with mixed results. These differential impacts also may have significant future consequences.

The implementation stage also entails considerable discretionary powers on the part of department heads, public employees, or others who oversee implementation. The "letter of the law" may not be rigidly followed; actual impacts may turn out to differ from intended impacts.

Normally, in the implementation stage, activity again becomes less visible. The combination of administrative discretion and limited visibility may allow individuals and groups who favored the previous status quo to prevail once again. In some cases, results may include the gradual erosion of changes brought about by a decision. In addition, even if new routines are implemented, the limited visibility of the implementation stage is likely to allow old barriers to the raising of issues to reappear.

The new mobilization of bias may be completely identical to the previous one. The decisionmaking process just completed may have at least marginal effects. For example, it might have weakened the mobilization of bias by having allowed the questioning of previous routines, or by demonstrating the successful advocacy of change. On the other hand, if the advocates lost badly, their sense of futility and perception of the status quo as unchangeable may have been reinforced or strengthened. Even if the advocates won, the mobilization of bias could have been increased by giving those who benefit from the status quo an even clearer license to argue that the system has responded, and that further changes are uncalled for.

## Evaluation

Evaluation is sometimes a formal process of data collection and analysis to assess the effectiveness, efficiency, or equity of certain programs. More often, implementation is evaluated in a purely informal or political fashion. People simply experience the new routines and react in various ways. Once again, the ability to evaluate implementation and the ability to do something about it, if problems are recognized, are unequally distributed. Evaluation will be easiest for administrative personnel or other "insiders." It will be inhibited for some individuals and groups by nondecisionmaking and the suppression of issues. But, in time, dissatisfactions are likely to emerge. The people who initiated the previous decisionmaking process may find that they are not satisfied—that problems still exist. Perhaps even more likely, other people may discover that they are disadvantaged in some way by the new routines. In either case, the issue may be raised again, perhaps in a different form, or new issues may be raised, and another decisionmaking process will begin.

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Kriesberg (ed.), *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts, and Change*, Vol. 5. Greenwich, Conn.: JAI Press.

# Two Worms—The Importance of Facts, Myths, and Values in Public Policy

By **B. L. Flinchbaugh**

Public policy is an identifiable course of action hammered out in the political arena to maximize the satisfaction of relevant interest groups in society and to improve the general welfare.

There are basically four points in this definition of public policy. "An identifiable course of action"—we are not talking about theory or the dream world. In the real world, "an identifiable course of action, hammered out in the political arena." The purpose of public policy is "to maximize the satisfaction of relevant interest groups." There is no question that, in this country, we have become a government of special-interest groups. And they make public policy. I tacked a phrase on the end of the definition, "to improve the general welfare." You might question that. Some people would argue that the general welfare has not been improved; that all we really have is a government of special interests. But, over the long haul, if we look at public policy, in general, I would argue we have improved the general welfare.

Let us take this a step further. Public policy is developed through debate and compromise. That word, compromise, may be the most important word we will use in discussing public policy. Debate and compromise occur among diverse interests. Those diverse interests have differing views about economic and social problems and the government's role in dealing with them. In the final analysis, many public policy issues involve the role of the government. An issue that comes to mind has been debated long and hard for many years. I refer to the government setting dietary goals. If any of you deal with the livestock industry, you are well aware of the issue. I like to eat, and it shows. I can say, using my value system, that it is none of the government's damn business what I eat! The real issue is the government's role in our eating habits. It is not "Should we eat more or less meat?" It is not those specific goals that the government sets. It is really a question of the government's role. Should the government just provide information on nutrition; make it available; provide educational programs; or should the government establish strict dietary guidelines for the American people? Frequently, public policy issues simply become a question of the government's role.

What are the characteristics of public policy issues? Public policy issues are normally stated in terms of symptoms rather than the problem itself. Public policy issues are public policy problems stated in terms of symptoms. Specifically, public policy issues:

1. *Require a group decision.* We are not talking about individual problems. We are dealing with group problems. These problems require a group decision.

2. *Solutions are based on value judgments.* If we can settle the problem through scientific analysis; if we can come up with the answer in the laboratory, it is not a public problem. Public problems involve value judgments to arrive at solutions. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers to public policy solutions. I tell my audiences in seminars in Kansas, right up front, "You all came in here with the answer to the problem we are going to discuss. And you might as well understand and convince yourself that your way of doing it is never going to happen." If you can convince yourself of that, you are a long way toward beginning to discuss the problem rationally. The answer will be a compromise based on value judgments. Your way of doing it will not happen.

3. *Are of broad interest and concern.* Frequently, when they are together in a group discussing public issues, people

will say, "Something ought to be done." Public policy issues evoke broad interest and concern.

4. *Are controversial.* If you are not dealing with a controversial issue, you really are not dealing with a problem that concerns the public. Public policy issues are controversial, and that is why Extension educators require a unique methodology to deal with them.

5. *Are recognized by key decisionmakers as a problem.* A public policy is really not an issue until the key decisionmakers recognize the problem. It does not really matter what you all think in your local coffee klatch, if the key decisionmakers are not convinced it is a problem. Such recognition is required to arrive at a solution.

Issues often are stated in terms of symptoms or solutions, rather than in terms of the problem. A few weeks ago I made a rather sad journey back to my alma mater, Purdue University. The old guru of public policy education had passed away—"Heavy" Kohlmeyer, at 85 years of age. He and Dr. Carroll Bottum, at Purdue, basically put together this body of thought we use in public policy education. I have always considered myself extremely fortunate to have studied at the feet of those two gentlemen. And, if you knew them, that is a literal statement, because they were in charge. They directed a public policy education program in Indiana in the 1930s on social security. Indiana is a conservative, "red-neck" state, even today. In those days, if you dared mention the word "social security" in rural Indiana, you were "pink" at best, and downright communist at worst. You were promoting the ideas of that wild-eyed, liberal New Yorker, Franklin D. Roosevelt. But these two gentlemen directed a policy education program on social security.

The first problem they had was to define the problem. What do you think the problem is, since we are still dealing with social security as a public issue? What is the *real* problem? The issue in those days was "Should we or should we not have social security?" The issue today is "How to fund social security." Is the real problem the distribution of wealth? Is it really a retirement program? Helping people survive retirement? Who's responsibility is it to fund retirement? Quality of life for retired folks? The issue, as stated back in the 1920s, was "Should we establish social security?" The problem is how to take care of old folks. Who's responsibility is it, and what is the government's role? Think how quickly one could defuse a hot controversial issue by phrasing it that way, instead of going in and saying, "Well, tonight we are here to discuss whether or not we ought to have social security." Immediately there will be two sides—the liberals and the conservatives. If, instead, you go in and say, "Tonight we are here to discuss how to take care of old folks," is anybody in the audience going to disagree with that? So it is very important to get to the problem immediately. Get away from the symptoms or the issue in the political context. Get to what is really concerning people—the common ground.

Before we provided tax alternative seminars in Kansas, we were told what the issue was, and what the problem was—taxes are too damn high! We diffused that issue immediately. We put it in rational terminology by saying we accept as given the cost of government. We are not here to debate the cost of government. The problem becomes, how to fund it. More specifically, what should the tax mix be to fund it? How much from each tax? The controversy was over the property tax. So the problem became how much we should get from each of the three major taxes—property, sales, and income—to fund the government. Immediately, we had that issue in a decisionmaking framework, since we were discussing the problem, rather than the symptoms. Let me try to diagram all this and get at this question: How are public policy decisions made?

This is a public issue—a problem. Folks are saying something ought to be done. Some of them are saying there ought to be a law. So that is where we begin. It may begin in a local tavern, church pew, or club. There are some known facts about each public policy issue, as well as an abundance of myth. Then, each of us has his or her values. And each of us assumes this country is a Jeffersonian democracy in which everyone is welcome to his or her own set of values.

One of the things that you need to remember as an Extension educator is that, just because you have studied the issue, just because you have a degree behind your name, and just because you may be the "expert," does not make your values superior to anyone else's. There is a set of facts about each public policy issue. There is an abundant supply of mythology; and we all have our own values (see Figure 3). Just think of facts, myths, and values being put in a gunny sack and being redistributed, shaken up. All three come into play.

*A fact* is a verifiable statement of what is. The sales tax in Kansas is 4 percent; that is a fact. Social security is partially funded out of current tax dollars; it is not a long-term pension fund. Current workers are paying the bill for those who are drawing retirement benefits. Those are all facts that can be verified.

*A myth,* in the public policymaking process, is treated exactly the same as a fact, because a myth is what people think is fact. The real purpose of public policy education is to establish fact and destroy mythology. If we get the job done; if we establish fact and destroy mythology, we have basically completed our task as a public policy educator. I look at that as the main purpose of public policy education—to increase the body of fact, to increase public understanding, and to disprove mythology.

*Values* are what should be. Values cannot be proven right or wrong. Part of the government's responsibility is to look after old folks. That is a value judgment. It cannot be proven right or wrong. It is the government's responsibility to ensure economic justice. That is an interesting term. Everybody is for economic justice; it is like God, motherhood, apple pie, and parity. You cannot oppose economic justice. Let us define economic justice and use it to make the diagram in Figure 3 much clearer.

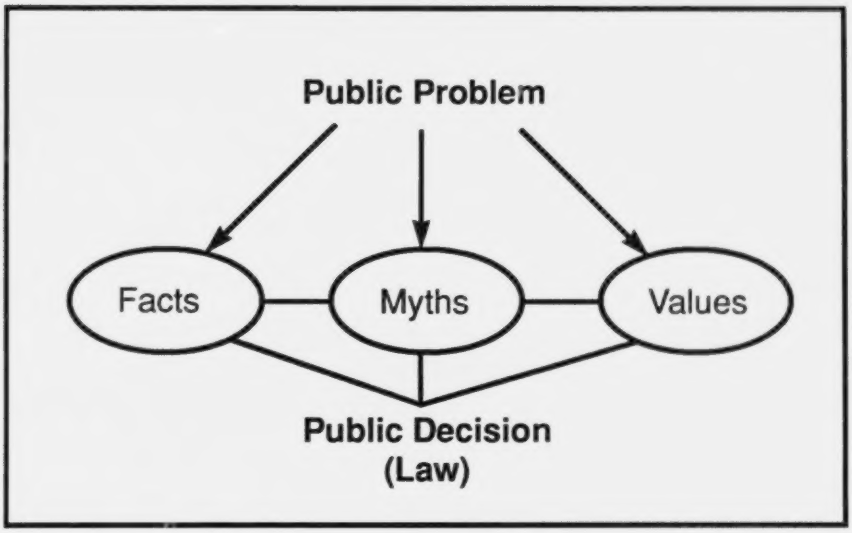

**Figure 3. How public decisions (laws) are made**

There are three definitions of economic justice:

1. *Each according to contribution.* This is the old principle of free enterprise, agricultural fundamentalism, or whatever you want to call it. As it was described to me in China, the last time I was there, "no work, no eat"—that is, each according to contribution. If you do not contribute anything, you do not get anything.

2. *Each according to need.* This definition is on the opposite end. Each of us has a basic set of needs—we need food, water, shelter, clothing, and other necessities.

3. *Each the same.* I can prove that this definition of economic justice is a myth, because treating each the same really does not turn out that way. Let us take a 16-ounce steak. We are going to set two plates here. One is mine; the other plate is for a petite young lady. She does not eat very much steak. About 6 ounces will do, but I need 16 ounces. I am going to get more satisfaction out of that sixteenth ounce than she will. This is the concept of marginal utility. We do not all need the same to have the same degree of satisfaction.

We will argue definitions one—each according to contribution—and two—each according to need. This has been a basic political issue in this country. Politically, we have settled it with an interesting solution. The definition of economic justice, politically, has become each according to minimal need, then according to contribution. Does Ted Kennedy believe in that? Does he? Yes! How about the President, does he believe in that? Yes. In fact, he has a beautiful political term for it—safety net. In many public issues, the real debate centers around the definition of those words, or in Reagan terms, the safety net. When it comes to public welfare, Teddy Kennedy's safety net has very small holes in it. The President has larger holes in his. So the issue is the size of the holes in the net that describes the current philosophical political debate in this country. It is down to that very simple question: the size of the holes in the net. That is what the farm bill debate was all about!

Facts, myths, and values are involved in every public issue, and out of that comes public policy—a law, a regulation, an executive order, among others. The Kansas sales tax is 4 percent. That is a fact. Those who believe in small holes in the safety net immediately argue that the sales tax is regressive; that is a myth. Not all sales taxes are regressive. If food, clothing, shelter, drugs, medical bills are exempt, a tremendous amount of the regressivity has been taken out of the sales tax. So, not all sales taxes are equally regressive. Not all sales taxes tax the poor relatively more than the rich. Objectively, one cannot simply make the judgment that all sales taxes are bad because they are regressive. Some of the regressivity can be removed. Explaining that fact destroys a myth and separates fact from myth and values. We have a terrible time understanding value judgments. How big the holes in the net should be requires, in the final analysis, a value judgment. The illustrations in Figure 4 explain value judgments beautifully.

Figure 4 shows a pair of worms. We have a public issue here that we have to settle. We are going to settle it in this room, democratically—one person, one vote. The public issue is, "Which one of these two worms is the longest?" [*Note:* This illustration was used in the public policy education class at the Extension Winter School in Tucson, Arizona. The dialogue follows.]

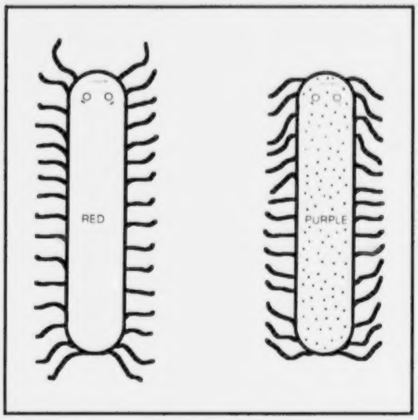

**Figure 4. Two worms**

Which one is the longer? Everybody votes, no fence riders today. Let us see the hands. How many think the purple worm is the longer: 37 in total. How many think the red one is the longer: only one. How many think that the worms are the same size: 14 in total. Let us measure them. The purple one is 19 1/2 inches and the red one is 17 1/2 inches long. The illustration is designed as an optical illusion to look the same, when actually they are different sizes. We have settled the issue with little difficulty.

Why? The one-foot ruler is a measuring stick. There is universal agreement that there are 12 inches in that one-foot ruler. We can settle this issue in the laboratory without a value judgment. This is really not a public issue; in this case, there is universal agreement on the size of the holes in the net.

Now we have another issue that we are going to settle. Which worm is prettier? Or, as a lady said to me one time, "Which is the least ugly?" How are we going to settle that? Do you know of any measuring stick on prettiness that is universally acceptable like the one-foot ruler? Let us vote. How many think the purple worm is the prettier: one. How many think the red one is the prettier: 17 in total. Only one said the purple worm is the prettier. We are going to pass a law declaring the red worm the prettier.

Values are involved. The one student was clearly outvoted. We made a decision that the red worm is the prettier, and the student is temporarily "wrong." Or, at least she did not get her way. But she basically has two options. She can work within the system to change our minds, and get the vote changed. Or, as is done in many countries around the world, there could be a coup; just overthrow the government. Throw out the reds, bring in the purples. Do you see the difference? There is no measuring stick for pretty that is universally accepted. When a measuring stick on which there is universal agreement is not available, we settle issues with value judgments. We do this through two systems: compromise, in a democratic society, or dictatorship.

Value judgments apply when there is not complete agreement on the measuring stick; then, we have a public issue. The issue cannot be solved by scientific analysis. It must be solved. It must be solved in the political arena, through debate and compromise among diverse interests that have divergent views.

# Understanding Values and Ethics in Public Policy Education

By **R.J. Hildreth and G.L. Johnson**

## Introduction

Public policy issues often are decided in a climate of heated debate. Educators and Cooperative Extension personnel are increasingly called upon to participate in helping to resolve issues of public interest. They may be asked to provide "expert" opinion, or encouraged to advocate or support the views of a particular interest group.

The climate of controversy calls for a clear evaluation on the part of the educator as to what role the educator will play, as well as what framework or guideline to use in assisting the progress of interest groups in creating the most feasible solutions and compromises to "what ought to be." The educator does not possess the wisdom to make the "right" choice for society. Rather, the educator must value the right of individuals to choose for themselves.

Most of the friction in dealing with public problems stems from value conflicts among interest groups concerned with a particular issue. Values are especially important in determining what is a more desirable state of affairs, in selecting a solution from available alternatives, and in implementing the chosen alternative.

The process of judging alternative solutions must proceed by means of a dialogue among interested parties that allows for an exchange of information. In the course of seeking resolution, one often discovers that disagreements on facts turn out to mask disagreements on values and ideology, disguised as factual disparities.

In this paper, we will try to clarify types of information that come to bear on public issues and to provide a theoretical framework for understanding the structure and process in resolving these issues.

## Framework

The proposed framework focuses on the relationships among value information, value-free information, decision rules, prescriptive information, and policy. The framework is presented schematically in Figure 5.

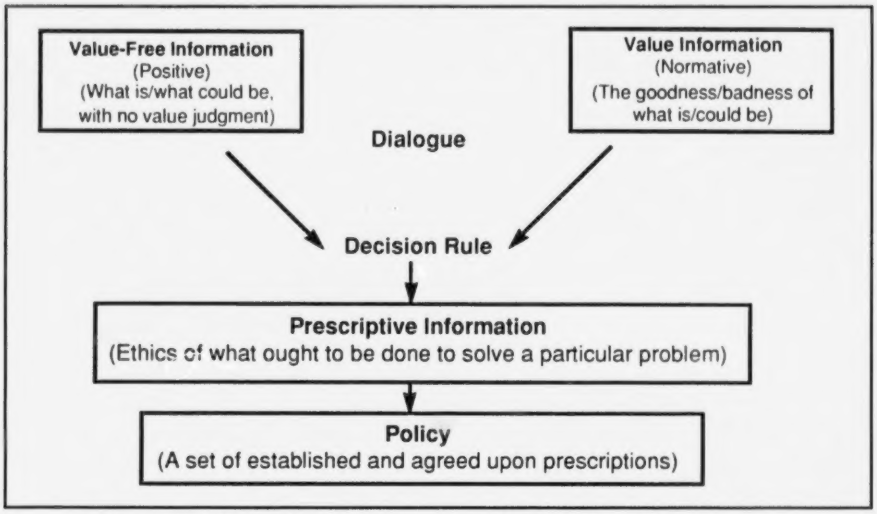
Value-Free Information
(Positive)
(What is/what could be, with no value judgment)
Value Information
(Normative)
(The goodness/badness of what is/could be)
Dialogue
Decision Rule
Prescriptive Information
(Ethics of what ought to be done to solve a particular problem)
Policy
(A set of established and agreed upon prescriptions)

**Figure 5. Theoretical framework of the public policy process**

*Value-free, positive information* provides the answers to questions such as what is; what will be; and what could be, that do not imply goodness or badness. This type of information is commonly thought of as "hard" scientific data. It is knowledge based on what can be experienced, and is organized with logic. Value-free information facilitates the explanation and prediction of empirical phenomena.

*Value knowledge* or *normative information* deals with the goodness and badness of conditions, situations, and things, including what is; what will be; and what could be. Value knowledge is commonly allied with humanistic information, and is subjective.

Science cannot be used to identify the most appropriate set of values. Even an undisputed fact may be viewed quite differently by different interest groups. Part of the job of the public policy educator is to help people separate fact from values, beliefs, and emotions. While values are appropriately included in policy debate, their identification as such will make compromise among divergent interest groups easier.

The tests for truth or coherence (logic), correspondence (experience), and clarity (lack of ambiguity) can be applied to either positive or normative information. Since the results of these tests for truth are time-dependent and culture-dependent, as well as judgmental, the truth of both types of information can be regarded as objective, although imperfect. Neither is completely provable; both are viewed as capable of being made "good enough for purposes at hand."

## Conflict in Policy Issues

Much of the conflict in dialogue and discussion about prescriptions and policy is due to failure of various parties to ascertain whether the disagreement is about values or value-free information, or which decision rule to follow. Humanists often deal with values, while scientists often deal with value-free, positive information that explains and predicts positive phenomena, without regard to values. In our view, both groups may have somewhat myopic views of their activities.

For scientists, value information usually is inherent, but unrecognized, in their analyses. For humanists, value-free information also is often inherent, but not recognized. Scientists, for instance, often limit their prescriptions (what ought to be) to those that can be measured by their discipline. Failure to recognize these inherent mixtures is a source of poor and confusing analyses. The presence of value conflicts should not be interpreted as the existence of completely different value systems. More often, individuals or groups in conflict are simply placing different emphasis or priority on values that they both appreciate, but that also happen to clash.

Values cannot be "proved" to be right or wrong through facts, figures, or scientific inquiry. They must be constantly reassessed in light of new information and changing conditions. The Extension educator can help individuals or interest groups recognize that values are personal perceptions of what is good or bad, and encourage openness to the constructive criticisms and viewpoints of others who emphasize different values.

## Decision Rules

*Ethics* deals with the correctness of decisions about what ought to be done (prescriptive information), while value information deals with goodness and badness. Value information distinguishes between *goodness* and *badness*, while ethics deals with the prescription of *rightness* and *wrongness*. It is not always "right" to do that which is good. It may be possible to do something better, with the same or fewer resources. In the same way, it is not always "wrong" to do that which is bad, if the least bad among bads is chosen. Thus ethics has to do with determining whether decisions and acts based on decisions, are right or wrong.

Assessing the consequences of alternative approaches or solutions to a given problem will include the costs and benefits of each alternative, as well as determine who pays the costs and who receives the benefits. In actual practice, it may be too costly or time-consuming to assess completely the consequences of all alternatives.

The development of prescriptions depends upon both value and value-free information. Some decision rule must be found to put together both types of information to arrive at prescriptions. Perfect knowledge of either value or value-free phenomena seldom exists, and it is infinitely expensive. Thus, decision rules always involve uncertainty, and the answers to prescriptive questions are always less than perfect.

Since perfect knowledge of either value or value-free information is infinitely expensive, knowledge is never all-powerful in making decisions. In addition to balancing the goodness and badness of results, decision rules must take into account some *distribution of power* to reconcile the conflicts that arise in making the decisions in the absence of perfect knowledge. We need covenants as part of our decision rules to indicate whose views count for how much. Within a family, a company, a public, or among participants in a market situation, the distribution of power determines each person's ability to influence prescriptive decisions.

It seems important to distinguish between *public* and *private* policy. Each decision unit makes policy. Decision units include individuals, families, companies, and units of government. While public policy is made by public decision units (usually government), private policy may use its resources to influence public decisions. The growth of political action committees in recent years is an example. And, of course, the public policy decisions provide the framework within which private units operate.

Another pitfall in analyzing alternatives is failure to distinguish between *desirable* and *feasible* changes. Value knowledge alone may lead to the conclusion that a change is desirable and, therefore, must be feasible as well. The resources required to solve a problem may, in some cases, be more valuable than the benefits associated with solving the problem. Positive information may lead to the conclusion that a change is feasible and, therefore, desirable. Pursuit of the desirable often may be infeasible. Wasting a scarce resource, while opting for a feasible solution, may preclude the search for a more desirable option that may have greater impact. Clear, careful separation of the types of information being analyzed will help integrate the contributions of scientists and humanists in making public policy decisions.

## The Framework and a Policy Action System

The movement from prescription to public policy is not automatic. Different groups and interests in society develop different prescriptions. Often the prescriptions are too abstract and intangible. The means/ends framework, outlined in Figure 6, illustrates a pragmatic approach to guide educational efforts with regard to public policy. This framework represents a policy action system that treats ends and means as two elements of an action system. Action systems typically involve a continuum of means and ends.

The policy formulation or decisionmaking process can be viewed as an interaction among educators, policy analysts, decisionmakers, and affected groups and persons. Different participants do not view in the same light the value and value-free information about conditions, ends, and means.

There is no institution in America whose imperative is to engage in this "working through" process for attaining consensus on prescriptions ("what ought to be done"). The political system is the

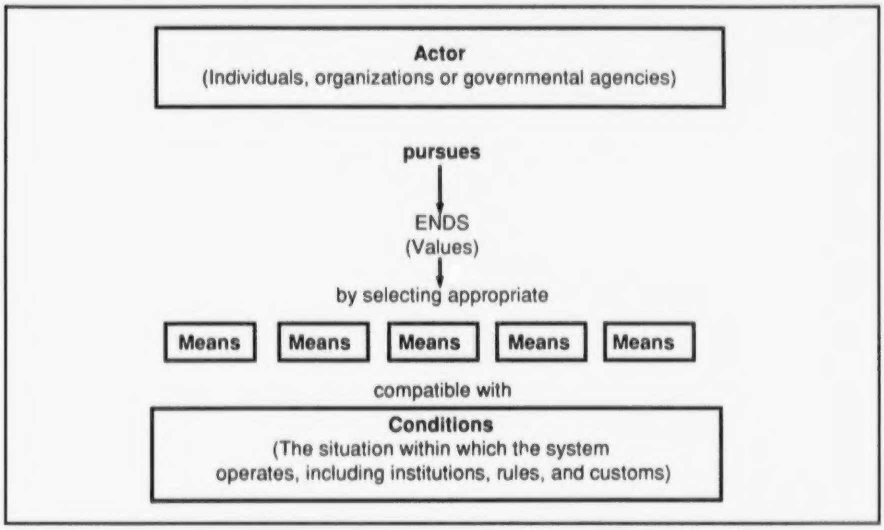
Actor
(Individuals, organizations or governmental agencies)
pursues
ENDS
(Values)
by selecting appropriate
Means
Means
Means
Means
Means
compatible with
Conditions
(The situation within which the system operates, including institutions, rules, and customs)

**Figure 6. Means/ends framework for understanding the public process**

closest. Different levels of government have various procedures, based on various power distributions, to reach decisions. These are sometimes legal and formal, as when Congress votes, and sometimes informal, as in lobbying. Cooperative Extension and the land-grant institution system have an opportunity to function in this role of facilitating citizen resolution of public policy issues.

## The Role of Public Policy Education

The public policy process provides a forum for changes in society. The U.S. Constitution places the ultimate political power with the people. However, since most people seldom exercise their ultimate political power, some have more influence than others, because they become part of an attentive public. Also, those people who are elected or appointed have more power on a specific issue because of their position, as well as their attention to the issue.

One legitimate role for the scientist and educator is that of public policy educator. The role asks for *perspective* from which the people or interest groups can best create their own solutions. ''Facts'' are not enough; and experience has shown that advocacy of a particular solution to an issue will cause the Extension educator to lose credibility.

Many public policy specialists in Cooperative Extension have developed techniques for educating the public on controversial issues relating to a number of different issues, without losing their legitimacy as educators. Their approach involves:

1. Issue identification,

2. Development of alternatives, and

3. Statements of consequences of alternatives.

Public policy decisions are viewed as *compromises* among divergent interest groups. There is no single public interest and no perfect solution to an issue of public policy. Scientific knowledge cannot be used to determine the ''correct'' policy choice for society because science cannot supply the value judgment that ranks the interests of one group as more important than the interests of others.

The public policy education approach, with emphasis on issues-alternatives-consequences, allows for *dialogue* about value and value-free information and decision rules. A legitimate role for the analyst or scholar is to play public policy educator.

For Extension educators to play their roles, it is important that they keep ethics identified with decisions, not value information. This can be done by assisting learners in evaluating the correctness of value and value-free information that is processed through the right decision rules to reach correct prescriptions, and thus policy.

To do this, Extension educators need to be philosophically eclectic. The following guidelines are suggested:

1. Work objectively with knowledge of goodness and badness (value knowledge), as well as value-free knowledge.

2. Test both value-free and value knowledge, logically for coherence, against experience for correspondence, and for clarity and workability.

3. When values and value-free knowledge are interdependent, Extension educators must be pragmatic; that is, help their learners develop prescriptions that work.

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## Pitfalls in Analyzing Public Problems

By **Sam M. Cordes**

Our values and beliefs greatly impact on our involvement in the public policy arena. For example, they influence which problems we view as important and how we think a particular problem should be resolved. In this paper, we will illustrate the crucial role that values and beliefs play in analyzing and resolving public problems and why it is essential that we have explicit knowledge of our own values and beliefs. But, first, what is a public problem?

Public problems exist because all human actions have consequences. If the consequences of an action go beyond the individual(s) or group(s) directly engaged in that action, they represent a potential public problem. Whether society translates a potential public problem into an actual public problem depends on many factors, not the least of which are the nature and extent of the consequences affecting those not engaged in the action, as well as those who happen to be the recipients and initiators of the consequences.

Conservation, for example, is viewed as a public problem because a significant segment of society recognizes that indiscriminate harvesting of wildlife or forests by one person prevents others from enjoying the aesthetic qualities and the economic productivity of these natural resources, in this generation and in the future. Similarly, educational quality is viewed as a concern, because a significant segment of society recognizes that the failure of Community A to provide adequate educational opportunities can affect welfare rolls in Community B, should someone migrate from Community A to Community B.

A public problem in one area or time may not be viewed as a public problem at some other time, or in some other setting. For example, conservation of natural resources was not viewed as a public problem in early days of America. Since there was no scarcity of these resources, the consequences of one person's actions did not affect others.

It is difficult to know which potential public problem(s) out of a vast array of possibilities will capture the attention of the public. Equally difficult is to reach consensus on the magnitude and cause of, as well as solutions for, a public problem after it has reached center stage. While this process will never become easy or perfect, certain approaches and skills can increase one's effectiveness in analyzing public problems.

A logical framework for analyzing public problems includes the following steps:

1. Defining the problem,

2. Determining the causes of the problem,

3. Developing alternative approaches for solving the problem,

4. Assessing the consequences of each alternative approach,

5. Selecting a "solution" from among the alternatives,

6. Implementing the chosen alternative, and

7. Evaluating the implemented solution.

### Values

Williams (1970, p. 27) says values "concern standards of desirability; they are couched in terms of good or bad, beautiful or ugly, pleasant or unpleasant, appropriate or inappropriate." According to Williams, values generally play their most important role at three points in the analysis of public problems:

- In determining what is a more desirable state of affairs,

- In selecting a solution from among the alternatives, and

- In implementing the chosen alternative.

For example, infanticide is not a realistic solution to the population explosion, because it runs contrary to "the sanctity of human life"—an important value for most persons in our society.

The roles of values and beliefs in analyzing and resolving public policies, as perceived by Williams, are illustrated diagrammatically in Figure 7.

Values are influenced by the expectations of those around us, and by the day-to-day perceptions, experiences, and observations in the physical, biological, and social worlds in which each of us operates. Because each person is unique in his or

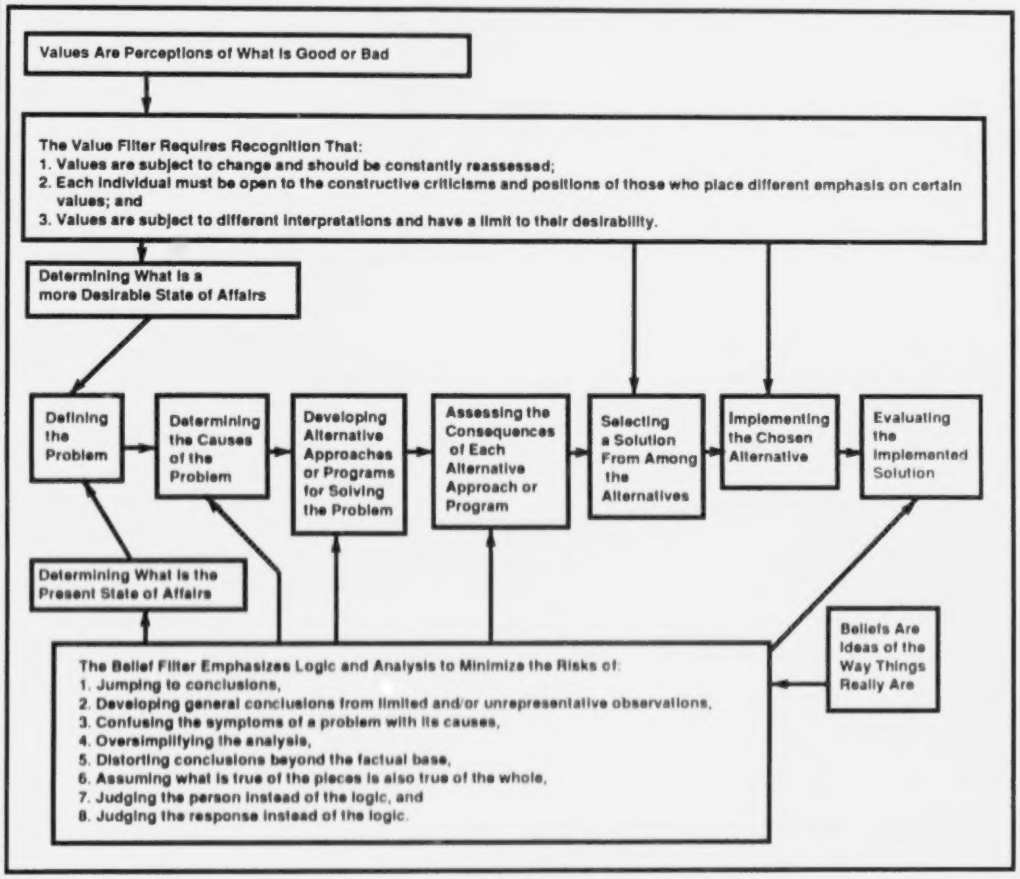
Values Are Perceptions of What Is Good or Bad
The Value Filter Requires Recognition That:
1. Values are subject to change and should be constantly reassessed;
2. Each individual must be open to the constructive criticisms and positions of those who place different emphasis on certain values; and
3. Values are subject to different interpretations and have a limit to their desirability.
Determining What Is a more Desirable State of Affairs
Defining the Problem
Determining the Causes of the Problem
Developing Alternative Approaches or Programs for Solving the Problem
Assessing the Consequences of Each Alternative Approach or Program
Selecting a Solution From Among the Alternatives
Implementing the Chosen Alternative
Evaluating the Implemented Solution
Determining What Is the Present State of Affairs
Beliefs Are Ideas of the Way Things Really Are
The Belief Filter Emphasizes Logic and Analysis to Minimize the Risks of:
1. Jumping to conclusions,
2. Developing general conclusions from limited and/or unrepresentative observations,
3. Confusing the symptoms of a problem with its causes,
4. Oversimplifying the analysis,
5. Distorting conclusions beyond the factual base,
6. Assuming what is true of the pieces is also true of the whole,
7. Judging the person instead of the logic, and
8. Judging the response instead of the logic.

Figure 7. Roles of values and beliefs in analyzing and resolving public problems

her perceptions, experiences, and observations, value conflicts are expected and are, indeed, the source of most of the friction in dealing with public problems.

The presence of value conflicts should not be interpreted as the existence of completely different philosophies of what is good or bad. Indeed, in a society such as ours, which is characterized by mobility and mass communications, a fairly basic set of values seems to predominate, regardless of such factors as place of residence, race, or socioeconomic class.

Individuals or groups in conflict often are simply placing different priorities on values that they both appreciate, but that also happen to clash. For example, two groups may prize both economic efficiency and full employment, but disagree over the introduction of a type of technology that enhances efficiency if it also creates unemployment. This disagreement arises because one group values economic efficiency more than full employment, while the other group values full employment more highly, and is willing to make some sacrifices in efficiency to achieve it. As another example, two groups may believe in preserving agricultural land and oppose governmental involvement in the economy. However, if one group believes that preserving agricultural land is of the highest priority and the other does not, a value conflict will emerge should the government act to prevent agricultural land from being used for nonagricultural purposes.

Unfortunately, there is no quick and easy formula for resolving value conflicts. But value conflicts can be minimized by recognizing certain fundamental principles.

First, values should be constantly reassessed to see if they can be rationalized in view of new information and changing conditions. Too often, new perceptions, experiences, and observations are used to reinforce old values and ideas, rather than to develop new ones. It is important to realize that values are subject to change. For example, economic growth and "progress" historically have been extremely important parts of the American value system. In view of recent environmental and energy problems, our society likely will need to reassess the desirability of economic growth and "progress," and the relative emphasis they should receive.

Second, it is essential to realize that values cannot be "proved" to be right or wrong through the use of facts, numbers, or scientific inquiry. Each individual must recognize his or her values as being nothing more and nothing less than his or her perception of what is good or bad. Consequently, each individual must be open to the constructive criticisms and viewpoints of those who place a different emphasis on certain values.

Third, almost all values are subject to different interpretations, and also are likely to be limited in their desirability. For example, nearly everyone talks about equality in education, but few ever specify whether they are referring to equal access to educational institutions, equal utilization of those institutions, or equal outcomes of the educational process. These are quite different concepts of equality, and programs designed to meet these different concepts likely would bear little if any resemblance to each other.

Another good example is freedom—it is frequently used as if it has some omnipotent, absolute dimension. The fallacy in this approach is adequately summed up in the old proverb, "What is freedom for the pike is death for the minnow." For example, some persons argue that "no smoking" regulations interfere with the smoker's freedom to smoke. While the argument is correct, insofar as it goes, it fails to recognize that the freedom to smoke interferes with someone else's freedom to breathe clean air. This "trade-off" concept underscores the essential point: the unthinking use of such words as "equality" or "freedom" does not help us deal intelligently with complex public problems.

## Beliefs: Factual and Perceived

While values guide our thinking in terms of defining what is a more desirable state of affairs, beliefs are ideas of the way things really are. There are two types of beliefs: factual and perceived. Both types may or may not be true. Unlike perceived beliefs, factual beliefs are thought to be based on facts. Unfortunately, factual beliefs also may be based on inaccurate information and analyses. Establishing "the facts" is an important first step to analyzing public problems. A statistician once noted to me that:

> In today's complex world, one cannot afford to accept unquestionably nor reject uniformly "facts" or points of view presented by others. One must use some sort of filter that, ideally, lets "good" information through and rejects "bad" information. Two of the most commonly used filters are the "agree with me" filter and the "good guys" filter. The "agree with me" filter has us read and use those facts and opinions that tend to substantiate the opinions we already have. The "good guys filter" leads us to read and accept any information that comes from an "OK" source, and to reject information from other sources. Obviously, neither of these is good enough.

A number of pitfalls are associated with using the "agree with me" and "good guys" filters. In analyzing public issues, the following eight pitfalls are to be avoided to make effective use of factual information and objective analyses.

1. *Confusing the symptoms of a problem with its causes.* The increase in the number of runaway children is an example of this pitfall. Is this the real problem, or is it merely a symptom of one or more of the following root problems: rebellious or disillusioned children, abusive parents, lack of parental discipline, lack of parental respect by children, or lack of parental love?

2. *Jumping to conclusions.* This pitfall frequently happens when there is a preconceived notion of what "the problem" is, and when facts are viewed in isolation. For example, suppose that the money spent on various welfare programs increases. People who are especially sympathetic with the poor may hastily conclude that the poor are finally getting to receive what they have been deserving all along, while those less sympathetic may hastily conclude that there has been an increase in the number of "lazy bums." While both conclusions are consistent with the facts, neither may be true, or both may be partly true.

3. *Developing general conclusions from limited or unrepresentative observations.* With enough effort, it is almost always possible to find an individual or situation to illustrate a particular idea. In seeking the "truth," it is essential to avoid "seeing what we want to see." For example, if an individual has a prejudicial stereotype for a certain racial or political group, he or she may make a mental note of all the experiences and observations supporting the stereotype, and casually dismiss those cases that do not fit.

Another good example of this pitfall is a recent radio advertisement in which a representative of a major soup company makes a telephone call; asks a question regarding the soup; and receives an impromptu and glowing endorsement of the product. The advertisement closes by saying, "The previous conversation was selected from a group of randomly made telephone calls." The missing link in what appears to be an attempt to make the endorsement sound representative of all consumers is that the conversation aired was not randomly selected from the randomly made telephone calls.

Although scientific research generally avoids such blatant misuses as those just mentioned, time and budgetary limitations frequently mean that researchers' work will be confined to a particular time period, geographical area, or socioeconomic class. This does not mean that subsequent findings should be ignored or never used as a basis for generalization. What it does mean is that the limitations of the study must be recognized, and caution must be exercised in generalizing the research findings.

4. *Oversimplifying the analysis.* Most of the problems faced in a complex and highly interdependent society do not lend themselves to simplified analyses and solutions. Diagnosing the total situation is necessary. For example, the incidence of "illegitimate" births (children born outside of marital agreement) among nonwhites is much higher than for whites, and it is obvious that illegitimacy cannot happen in the absence of nonmarital sexual intercourse. Hence, there is a tendency to attribute the difference to "promiscuous and irresponsible" nonmarital sexual behavior among nonwhites. The astute observer, however, will note that the effects of birth control practices and postconception marriages are sensitive to socioeconomic conditions. This means nonwhites are more likely to face financial barriers in using these two methods of avoiding illegitimacy. Indeed, a number of studies suggest that the frequency of nonmarital sexual intercourse is not sufficiently different between whites and nonwhites to affect illegitimacy rates between the two groups.

It logically follows that, if an error is made in trying to determine the cause of the problem, errors also will emerge in developing solutions. In addition, it is important to be aware of the unanticipated consequences of solutions. One "solution" to lagging agricultural productivity in less-developed countries, for example, is to introduce additional technology. However, in doing this, the possible side effect of driving more people out of agriculture into overcrowded urban areas must be recognized. In short, a solution to a public problem is not really a solution at all, if it simply shifts the burden of the problem from one segment of society to another, or from the present to the future.

5. *Distorting conclusions beyond the factual base.* Often, our individual view of a problem is influenced by considerations other than solid facts. These considerations may include unconfirmed rumors; a dramatic incident or two that has been sensationalized in the media; or an isolated incident that has affected us personally. For example, recent polls suggest that illegal drugs are the number one worry among Americans. How much of this worry is grounded in factual analysis and thoughtful and critical thinking; or how much of the worry stems from an emotional response to such incidents as the tragic deaths of John Belushi and Len Bias? Consider some facts: in 1981, 563 people died from cocaine abuse, compared to 98,186 in 1980 from alcohol abuse and about 300,000 annually from tobacco.

6. *Assuming what is true of the pieces also is true of the whole.* This pitfall is called the fallacy of composition. For example, an individual farmer who applies fertilizer will likely increase yield, and thereby increase his or her gross farm income. However, it does not necessarily follow that, if all farmers apply fertilizer, gross farm income will increase. In fact, gross farm income may actually decrease, if the increased yields drive prices down sufficiently.

7. *Judging the person instead of the idea presented.* Arguments, proposals, and views must be judged on their logical and analytical soundness rather than on the basis of who makes them. Hence, to argue that a proposal or statement is wrong, just because it is being championed by a white, a black, a John Bircher, or a communist, is to judge the person instead of the logic of the proposal or statement.

8. *Judging the response instead of the ideas presented.* Sometimes we hear such statements as "everyone agrees" or "27 million Americans can't be wrong." The use of such statements is sometimes called "appealing to the people." The fact that everyone agrees does not make something true, nor is there any logical reason why 27 million Americans can't be wrong!

## Summary

A potential public problem exists if the consequence of an action goes beyond the individual(s) or group(s) directly engaged in that action. The author's purpose, in this presentation, is to illustrate the pitfalls that exist in analyzing public problems when we are unaware of the crucial role played by values and beliefs.

Values guide our thinking in terms of what we perceive to be "good" or "bad." Most of the friction in dealing with public problems stems from value conflicts. Although value conflicts will always exist, they can be minimized by filtering accepted values through the following principles:

- Values are subject to change, and should be constantly reassessed;
- Each individual must be open to the constructive criticisms and viewpoints of those who place a different emphasis on certain values; and
- Values are subject to different interpretations, and are limited in their desirability.

Beliefs are ideas of the way things really are. The two types of beliefs are factual and perceived. It is important to filter beliefs and "facts" through rigorous logic and analysis to minimize the risk of:

1. Confusing the symptoms of a problem with its causes;

2. Jumping to conclusions;

3. Developing general conclusions from limited or unrepresentative observations;

4. Oversimplifying the analysis;

5. Distorting conclusions beyond the factual base;

6. Assuming what is true of the parts also is true of the whole;

7. Judging the person instead of the logic of the ideas presented; and

8. Judging the response instead of the logic of the ideas presented.

The reason for attempting to avoid the foregoing eight pitfalls goes to the core of our form of government. The essence of the democratic system is that individuals are responsible for themselves and others, in terms of the consequences of their choices. This responsibility means it is necessary for individuals to make well-informed choices, and such choices are not likely to be made whenever one falls into either of the eight pitfalls.

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# Issue Evolution and Educational Intervention

ByVerne W. House

Since Charles Gratto developed the issue evolution and educational intervention model, in 1973, it has become widely used to teach the concepts of public policy education. As implied by its title, Gratto's model actually is two models in one. It is both a model of public policy-making and of public policy education. In the model, Gratto first describes how issues evolve through political action. Then he sets forth ways that educators may intervene at each stage of the issue cycle.

As presented here, the model has been modified in two ways. First, the description of issue evolution has been simplified to make it easier to teach. Second, appropriate educational possibilities are explored at each stage of the issue cycle. The modified version is less specific about issue evolution, but more specific about educational options.

## Issue Evolution

First, we need to take a look at how issues evolve. Issues may have political boundaries but they seldom are partisan. But, in most cases, their evolution pattern is similar (see Figure 8).

Issues do not just happen; they spring from (1) a *concern* or aggravation, or someone's vision of what could be. If this concern is shared by other people, they begin their (2) *involvement* by means of informal discussion. As more people become involved in the concern, communication becomes more complex. Finally, (3) the *issue* emerges.

The discussion of issues usually generates differing ideas as to what could be done. These are (4) *alternate solutions*, each of which may be evaluated in terms of (5) its *consequences*. What will be gained or lost? Who will benefit? Who will lose? How much difference will it make? Is it feasible?

Eventually (6) a *choice* is made. The choice may be to forget the whole issue and maintain the status quo; it may be a referendum or a vote by a public body.

If the new policy is to change something, its (7) *implementation* is necessary. As the policy is being implemented, the affected public will be involved in the (8) *evaluation* of the benefits and disadvantages of the choice. Evaluation is not likely to be done in the systematic or analytical way a scientist or policy analyst would do it. Rather, it is a social process in which the people affected discuss what the policy does and does not do. If several people share the view that the policy is working, the issue will die. If the opposite view is held, concern will be heightened and the issue cycle has begun anew. Note that an issue may die at any stage. Also, the length of the stages is hard to predict.

## Educational Intervention

You can assist others to become involved in identifying and resolving local issues. There are many ways that you may choose to assist: at times, by educating people about tasks to accomplish, or by providing information, or by being a facilitator. Your skills and interests will dictate where you can work most effectively, as well as what skills you may wish to improve. Your contribution will vary, depending on the stage of issue evolution in the community.

Following is a partial list of possible activities in the eight phases of issue evolution. Any collection of experienced Extension agents and specialists can think of possibilities to add to this list.

1. *Concern:*

- Listen actively.
- Ask clarifying questions.

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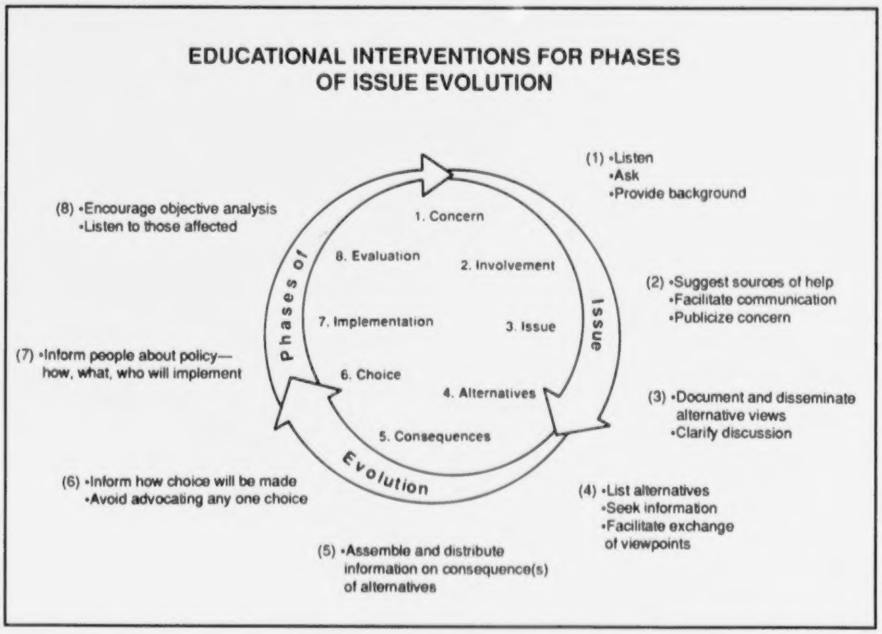
EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTIONS FOR PHASES OF ISSUE EVOLUTION
Phases of Issue Evolution
1. Concern
2. Involvement
3. Issue
4. Alternatives
5. Consequences
6. Choice
7. Implementation
8. Evaluation
(1) •Listen •Ask •Provide background
(2) •Suggest sources of help •Facilitate communication •Publicize concern
(3) •Document and disseminate alternative views •Clarify discussion
(4) •List alternatives •Seek information •Facilitate exchange of viewpoints
(5) •Assemble and distribute information on consequence(s) of alternatives
(6) •Inform how choice will be made •Avoid advocating any one choice
(7) •Inform people about policy—how, what, who will implement
(8) •Encourage objective analysis •Listen to those affected

**Figure 8. Phases of issue evolution**

- Provide background information based on research.

2. *Involvement:*

- Provide information about organizations or individuals that might be helpful.

- Facilitate communications among interested parties.

- Publicize the concern through media and meetings for greater public awareness.

3. *Issue:*

- Document and disseminate views on the issue.

- Help clarify discussion.

4. *Alternatives:*

- Help people identify alternatives.

- List alternatives and circulate the list among interested parties.

- Seek out objective information on alternatives.

- Facilitate communication and exchange of viewpoints.

5. *Consequences:*

- Assemble and distribute objective information on the consequences of each alternative.

- Help people make their own predictions of alternatives.

6. *Choice:*

- Inform people how the choice will be made: (formal/nonformal, decision arena, decisionmaking process).

- Do *not* tell people what they should do, or you lose credibility as an educator. Advocating your solution is politics, not education.

- Teach skillful participation in policymaking processes (leadership development programs).

7. *Implementation:*

- Inform people how the policy came to be; what it is intended to do; who will be responsible for promulgating rules and enforcement; and so on.

8. *Evaluation:*

- Encourage objective analysis of the policy.
- Accumulate data about program effects.
- Listen to the people who are affected.
- Interpret evaluation studies

The most predictable of all issue cycles is the federal farm program. It has had a four-year life for decades so one expects that in the first two to three years of the act, its effects are being evaluated and concern is rising about what the policy should be. One to two years before the act is to expire, involvement broadens and the issue starts to emerge. Next, each interest group starts to advocate its preferred solution and negotiate coalitions. As these alternatives emerge, their consequences are of interest to all involved. With the 1985 Act, the pattern changed somewhat: the Act is for five years and the Secretary has more discretion to revise the rules while the Act is in place. So, there is a lot more action than is usual during the implementation phase of the Act.

Still the Act expires in 1990 and the cycle is somewhat predictable. This degree of regularity is the exception, not the rule.

## Program Planning

Suppose a decision is made to offer an Extension education program or, in the language of this model, to intervene. As Gratto (1973) originally described it, intervention would consist of (1) preparation, (2) resources, (3) program delivery, and (4) evaluation. These terms describe typical steps in Extension education.

1. *Preparation:* Activities required to initiate a program include planning, study of the issue, designing the program, and preparing the first versions of teaching materials. Planning includes communicating with key persons, such as those in interest groups, experts, peers, key Extension program leaders, and other administrators.

2. *Resources:* Accumulation and deployment of teaching resources. Considerations are teacher time, travel, publishing materials, and coordination of the program effort.

3. *Program:* The learning activities that relate to the issue. Obviously, these might use several media—personal contact, conferences, fairs and exhibits, radio and television programs, meetings, short courses, seminars, workshops, and written communications ranging from leaflets to monographs and including correspondence.

4. *Evaluation:* Measuring the effectiveness or impact of the program.

These four steps are not unique to educating about public decisions. As educators, we decide what to do, and lay the groundwork. We gather resources. We do the teaching. And we try to ascertain the effects. These steps are all part of linking appropriate educational programs to educational needs.

However, when educating about a public policy issue, whether the subject is taxes, or health, or farm policy, the educational considerations become more sensitive and complex. Three differences are noted here.

First, whether or not the educational activity is appropriate depends, in part, on the stage of the issue. In general, programs appropriate in the early stages of the issue cycle (concern, involvement, issue) are designed to increase awareness. After the issue is fairly well agreed upon, or identified, programs that provide information about the consequences of alternatives are the most typical. Programs to explain the options created by and the effects of the public policy chosen are provided after the choice is being implemented and evaluated. (For example, choice of an agricultural policy makes a set of options available to farm managers. As the program is being implemented, people will be evaluating its effects. These evaluations are likely topics for educational programs at this stage of the issue.)

Second, intervention is possible at any stage of the issue. Some type of educational program is possible, even when the issue is "abirthing." This does not mean that Extension agents or specialists should intervene; only that intervention is a possibility. There may be many good reasons not to intervene: insufficient agreement among the experts, lack of educational resources, "teachable moment" not available, and so on. Each Extension educator has to make that judgment. But the point is that educational activity is not restricted to any one phase of the issue cycle. County Extension agents often are the first persons contacted about a concern. They can handle such concerns in many ways, and it is not always clear whether or not the concern is potentially a public issue. Extension specialists may not be involved until there is a request for specific information. Both may have legitimate roles to play in public policy education.

Third, evaluation of public policy programs differs from other Extension programs in that the role of the public policy educator is not as an advocate of a particular solution. Another way of putting it is that the status quo is one alternative solution, so the Extension educator cannot be an advocate of change, and change is usually what we evaluate. The objective cannot be worded in terms of a change in policy. Hildreth states that the objective of public policy education is to raise the level of the debate (House, 1981). I agree. So measurement is an unresolved problem.

## Relevance for Family Community Leadership Extension Programs

About one-half of the 50 states now have agricultural or rural leadership development programs. Some of these are operated by independent foundations, but they all have close ties to Extension. In addition, many state Extension services are initiating Extension programs modeled after the Family Community Leadership (FCL) programs started by Extension Homemakers Clubs and state Extension services in Washington, Oregon, New Mexico, Alaska, Hawaii, and Colorado. While the objectives and curriculum are similar, these are two different types of leadership development programs. Both equip and encourage participants to carry out their citizenship responsibilities. However, the FCL programs place an additional expectation on those who participate. FCL participants are expected not only to learn about public policy and apply it as citizens, but also to educate others about public policy. This expectation multiplies the impact of the program. Evaluations of the initial programs support the effectiveness of this new type of leadership development.

So FCL participants wear two hats—citizen and educator. And, to be effective as educators, they must be perceived by their audiences as objective. This requirement creates the need to balance and perhaps to sequence the roles. The issue evolution–educational intervention model (Gratto, 1973) is especially useful for those involved in FCL type programs to differentiate more clearly between their educator and citizen roles.

Gratto's model explicitly limits educators when the issue is at the choice stage. Citizens are expected to advocate their preferred alternative solution, but educators are expected to be silent. At this stage, educators can be teaching people what they need to know to be effective citizens—where and how the choice will be made; who will make the choice; how to communicate preferences; and other lessons that are part of the curriculum for leadership development programs. Our only limitation is that we cannot tell them what is best for them. The issue evolution-educational intervention model, more than any other, helps leadership program participants explore these two roles.

Public policy education and leadership development can contribute to political effectiveness, so the question of whom we educate is a sensitive one. Therefore, it is important that leadership development program participants make their teachings available to all, not just those who might share their policy objectives. This sharing can help prevent criticism of the program. The sage observation, "You are as you are perceived," is one to keep in mind.

Leadership development participants and Extension educators cannot wear both hats on an issue at the same time. The issue evolution–educational intervention model helps demonstrate both the educational and the citizenship opportunities. Rigorous evaluations conducted on these leadership programs make it clear that leadership development programs improve citizen involvement in the making of public policy. Further, the understandings and interests created by leadership development programs increase opportunities to offer public policy education programs.

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# The California Group Decision Process

by **L. Tim Wallace**

In this paper, we outline the group decision process, a method to help educators facilitate the decisionmaking capabilities of people involved in controversial issues. We summarize the results of a two-year project with selected County Extension faculty and other interested parties involved in both local and statewide public policy education efforts.

The group decision method has been applied to a variety of situations in California, such as water development and use; water quality; building a large dam; land use; air quality; use of pesticides; county and statewide educational budgets; environmental concerns, such as the protection of the stickleback fish, sea otter, and shellfish; public golf course use and fee scale; and range use and forestry.

## The Extension Educator's Role in Public Policy Issues

Cooperative Extension educators are increasingly becoming involved in public policy issues. Frequently called upon to respond to controversial issues, they may find themselves pressured to advocate a particular position for a particular group. Extension educators need to be clear about why and when to enter the public policy arena, as well as what can be contributed, once there. Experience has shown that, when we espouse a cause or offer "our" opinion, we lose our educational integrity.

Extension educators can best contribute to the policy process by (1) increasing the public's knowledge of methods, approaches, and techniques in problem identification; (2) helping people create and analyze alternative resolutions of the problem; and (3) helping identify criteria for evaluating the overall success of the solution ultimately chosen.

Issues of public interest often involve heated debate among factions that hold strongly polarized views. The group decision process is designed to help the Extension educator set up a learning environment in which to help the group focus its analytic energies. The role of the Extension educator as a neutral facilitator, rather than an "expert" with the most knowledge, is established at the onset.

Using Plato's style, the Extension educator asks the "right questions," rather than providing the "right answers." This approach serves as a catalyst to help the group achieve its own creative solutions to the problem. By eliciting trust in the learning environment, the Extension educator is able to lead discussions that tend to defuse frustrations, anger, and rigidity, as well as to negotiate around values and value conflicts to get to the real issues of concern to the various "factions."

## Use of the Group Decision Process

This step-by-step framework of the group decision process is a valuable key to (1) knowing where you are in the decisionmaking process at any given time; (2) being able to help push all the way through the process to resolution, without getting "bogged down"; and (3) showing you how to be flexible enough to integrate new information and ideas as they emerge in a value-loaded situation.

The process helps focus attention on analyzing concerns so your group can get to the "real" problem. It provides a guideline, a rough framework that allows the group to build on their own ideas and values. It also gives the group constructive feedback, while being responsive to the sensitivities of an issue—its timeliness, urgency, and available information.

## The Extension Educator's Role

Since the group decision process is dynamic, the Extension educator's role is to assure that the process moves forward and does not stagnate or become polarized into factions. Since the process is open-ended, you can take it backward to clarify a point, to add more data, or to move the group forward to get a change of pace: "Guess we are dealing with a different problem," or "But, without a goal, how can there be a problem?"

All of the process may not take place at the first meeting of the group. Participants have to build and negotiate mutual trust and appreciation among themselves and with the educator before much real work can be accomplished. The process usually begins with 10 to 25 concerned and influential persons who are involved in the same general subject or issue. With this core group, you cannot lose. As the Extension educator, you provide them with an objective forum where they can voice their concerns, doubts, and hopes, and still come away with mutual respect and a possible solution to their perceived problems. Remember, Cooperative Extension's stake is education—not the particular solution, whatever that may be.

Once the topic is selected, use a "brainstorming" technique to elicit ideas from the group. The Extension educator sets the stage by urging everyone attending to respond, in a minimum time, to the question or topic at hand. This means that explanations, negative comments, and justification for comments are not allowed to impede the flow of creative thinking. Using this technique easily allows a small group of people to identify over 100 concerns, or solutions, problems, goals (whatever the topic being brainstormed happens to be) in 5 to 10 minutes. The participants will gain confidence that their views will be heard; that their talents and creativity will be used; and that their time will not be wasted.

This paper is intended to help you, the Extension educator, to become an effective facilitator—an objective mover of people; an unbiased person who wants to help people find answers as much as they want to find them. Remember, advocacy by you has no place in this process. The purpose is to draw from the group.

## The Group Decision Process

Simply put, the approach to the group decision process that we have found to be most effective is (1) to identify the situation clearly; (2) to state what it is we want to do (the goal); (3) to phrase the problem as a question; (4) to create alternative solutions to the problem; (5) to decide on a particular alternative; and, finally, (6) to evaluate the results. This process is illustrated as a pyramid in Figure 9.

At any point in the process, new information can be introduced, or new concerns can shift the course of analysis. You may even find yourself working on a different problem than you began with, because your group established a different goal as the members learned more. The open-endedness of this process inspires the confidence of participants that resolution is possible, and that all sides will be heard, without bias.

Using the group decision process puts the Extension educator in the lead role of being aware of the discussion's progress and guiding it to resolution. It is your educational responsibility to keep the discussion from stalling; to move it through problem identification, toward discussion of possible answers. Remember, if you, as discussion leader and facilitator, fall into being a decisionmaker, your role as an educator is over.

The group decision process (Figure 9) is an elaboration of the following seven steps:

**Step 1:** *Situation*

The group decision process begins with recording "where you are now." In step 1, the group brings together any facts,

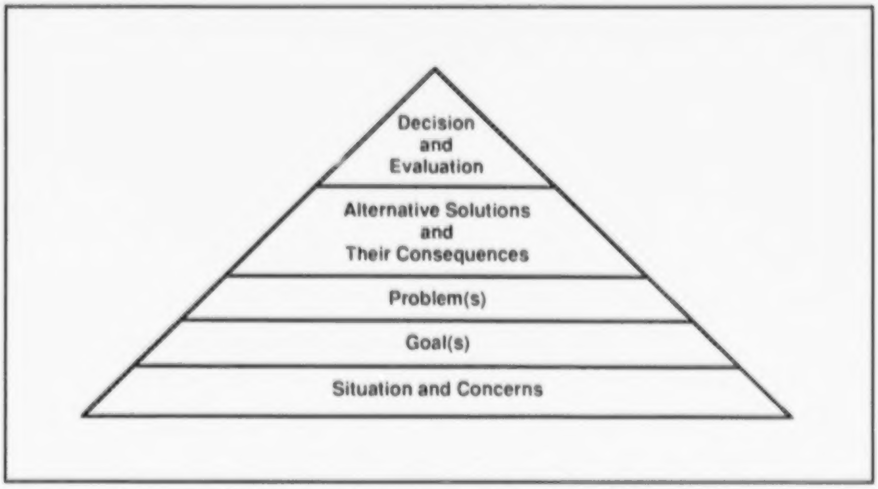

**Figure 9. The group decision process in problem solving**

concerns, fears, and other information about a particular topic. This documentation is simply a recording of "what is."

First, have the participants identify a topic that will provide a focused common ground for everyone. Second, describe the situation surrounding the topic; get at the heart of why the participants are assembled. Include history, background, facts, feelings, concerns, perceptions, identification of leading forces, and so on. Anything goes! The situation has to do with what the group members know about something (and what they do not know); what they are concerned about; and why they are concerned.

The brainstorming technique can be used to encourage participants to express themselves. Be nonjudgmental about what is being said. To judge anyone's comments as good or bad will stop the flow. Anything is fair once, but discourage repetition and statement justifications.

Record on a flip chart the group's ideas as they are expressed. This serves as the group "memory." Tape up the sheets around the room so everyone can see them and refer back to them anytime they want to.

**Step 2:** *Goal*

If everyone is happy with the status quo, there will be no need to change anything. But where there is concern about something, there is also a feeling that things could be better. Specifying what could be better brings out the goal. Once the situation and the concerns surrounding the topic are brought out to a sufficient degree (feel free to add to them at any time), it is time to set a goal, or "What is it that you want to change from the existing situation?" Work on one goal at a time, even though several may emerge.

**Step 3:** *Problem*

The problem is simply the "how to attain the goal" part of the process. Once the goal is identified, replace the "is to" with a "how to." The problem to resolve thus becomes a simply focused question; not an elaborate preamble, statement, or justification of a position.

**Step 4:** *Alternative Solutions*

Once the problem is phrased as a question, the many possible answers can surface. Various ways to achieve the goal and thereby solve the problem can be analyzed. Here is where the participants' differing values and knowledge about a topic are so important.

Draw out the various possibilities from your group. Some ideas may sound silly or impossible. Write them down anyway, and cross them out later when you eliminate duplication in a general consensus "weeding out." The object is to record all the vested-interest answers to the identified problem, while avoiding value conflicts. The challenge is to get the group to create some additional solutions of their own. These "what if" analyses provide the basis on which a group can make a decision, or ask for further information.

Creativity on the part of the Extension educator plays a crucial role at this point. Group trust also is vital. This step of the process is where each person may feel vulnerable because each one is doing something that he or she has never done before. There is risk involved! Encouragement, positive reinforcement, focus, and neutrality are all urged at this point. Remember that the educational role is to draw from the group's creativity, and to build on it via your "group memory."

### Step 5: *Consequences*

After the alternative solutions have been identified, the consequences of each solution are addressed. Consider each alternative separately, i.e., "What would happen if we actually implemented alternative #1?" Then, repeat the process through each of the alternatives presented.

Most of the criteria for evaluating the alternative chosen can be found in the expressed concerns about the situation. For example, how well will the alternative chosen reduce the fears; eliminate the concerns; reduce uncertainty; and get things going again? Who pays the costs; who receives the benefits? Individual values and freedom of expression are important, here, in determining what is a more desirable state of affairs, and in selecting a solution from among the alternatives.

### Step 6: *The Decision*

At step 6 is where the Extension educator steps down, while the professional analyst may choose to remain. The stage has been set for the group (or each individual participant) to make a decision, or even to take the analysis of alternatives back to the advocacy group for review. Decisionmaking is the point at which politics and personal values enter into play. Since the decision is based on value judgments, there is no "right" or "wrong" attached to the process, or, for that matter, to you as the facilitator, as long as you remain in that role.

The crux of the process is that the Extension educator has brought the group to a focus on a particular issue; led it to a definition of the problem; allowed it to be constructively creative about ways to resolve the problem; and then offered it a chance to make a decision, or to take the problem back to the group, where a decision can be made and advocated, if desired.

### Step 7: *Evaluation*

Evaluation of a decision can come full circle. It is important to ask whether or not each alternative suggested can really achieve the goal(s) identified, and thereby resolve the problem. It is amazing how many so-called "solutions" are not answers to the problem(s) articulated. The Extension educator can be of great help in identifying the values espoused by the group in the situation statement. Will the group's concerns be alleviated or amplified by implementing a particular solution? The educator can ask the group what trade-offs are necessary to relieve tension. Or, whether new (greater) problems and tensions might occur as a result of the solution alternative adopted.

## References

Black, H., J. Evans, G. Goodall, B. Hambleton, J. Reedy, A. Scarlett, and L. T. Wallace. "Cooperative Extension Public Policy Seminar Process." Division of Agricultural Sciences, Cooperative Extension Service, University of California, Berkeley. (Unpublished)

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# How to Do Public Policy Education—The "Ten Commandments"

By **B. L. Flinchbaugh**

## Approaches to Public Policy Education

I have observed, over the years, four approaches to public policy education—the scientific, evangelistic, analytical, and the alternative consequences approaches.

In the *scientific approach* to public policy education, the scientist sets up criteria from which to evaluate solutions to a defined public issue. The alternative solutions are analyzed according to a set of predetermined criteria. This approach is logical, methodical, and intellectually honest. The problem with it is that, to set up the criteria from which to judge solutions to public issues, values must be applied. For example, in using the scientific approach to evaluate alternative forms of taxation, progressivity is often the criterion for evaluation. The value held is that the rich should pay proportionally more taxes then the poor. Thus, to set up criteria, scientists have to apply their values.

The second, or *evangelistic approach*, is the Ralph Nader approach—"When the ol' bull is runnin' down the highway, hell bent for election, you don't wave a twig at him. You hit him over the head with a two-by-four!" You exaggerate; you promote; you sell; you package. What an evangelist does in this approach is promote a solution and convince others of his or her views. Remember the slogan that made Ralph Nader famous—"Unsafe at any speed" [10 mph]? A gross exaggeration intended to gain attention, to promote a solution.

The third, or *analytical approach*, appears to be objective and unbiased. The analyst lists the solutions and then, for each solution, two lists of consequences—the advantages and the disadvantages, the pros and the cons. Those words violate objectivity. Those words in and of themselves are value judgments. What is pro to one individual may be con to another.

The *alternatives-consequences approach* is that pioneered by my mentors at Purdue University—J. B. "Heavy" Kohlmeyer and J. Carroll Bottum, and that I have used for 15 years in Kansas on many controversial subjects. First, the problem is defined in terms of the actual problem, not the symptoms, in order to get to the real underlying issues and put it in a decisionmaking framework. The alternative solutions are listed; and, under each alternative, the consequences.

Several years ago in Manhattan, Kansas, we voted on a city sales tax. The intellectuals on campus were convinced the people would never vote for the tax. We just do not vote to increase our taxes. I said it would pass two to one. Why? Only the city people of Manhattan could vote on the proposal. And one-half of the revenue from that proposed sales tax had to go, by ordinance, to reduce property taxes. Who pays the sales tax in Manhattan, Kansas? The soldiers at Fort Riley, the students at the university, and the farmers and rural residents in surrounding counties. That is the same reason the tea was thrown overboard in Boston many years ago. Taxation without representation. They could not vote. But they were going to pay the tax.

The sales tax was pro to the residents of Manhattan and con to the rural residents, the students, and the soldiers. What is an advantageous consequence to one group of people will very likely be a disadvantageous consequence to another group of people. If you are going to teach objective public policy education, get those words out of your vocabulary. They are biased, nonobjective, value judgment terms. The neutral term is "consequences." Instead of two lists, you need just one.

The consequences of the passage of that local sales tax will be that city residents will benefit directly from it through property tax relief; the students, the soldiers, and the farmers will pay it, along with city residents. The former may get some benefits, such as police protection when they are in town, improved streets, and so on. List all the consequences, but do not break them into pros and cons because you immediately choose sides when you do that.

The first step is to define the problem. The second step is to list the alternatives and their consequences and, then, to stop. I have seen many public policy educators follow this approach. Open the discussion to the interested parties and someone in the audience will inevitably say, "Well, professor, what do you think?" My answer is I do not think on that particular subject that day. I have never found the real decisionmakers asking that question. They know who is going to make the decision—them, not me. They may say, "If we do this, what do you think will happen? What are the consequences going to be if we follow this option?" But I have never been asked by someone who I am convinced is a decisionmaker, "Well, what would you do, if you were in my shoes?" I have had people who think they are decisionmakers ask me that. But, the true decisionmakers know how to select among alternatives. They want the public policy educator to give them the analysis in terms of what the consequences are.

Another option to general discussion that we have used effectively is to divide the audience into discussion groups. These small groups discuss the alternatives and their consequences, and attempt to arrive at a compromise. Each group reports back what it decided. This small group approach to decisionmaking serves a lot of purposes. First, it is an educational exchange between participants. The farmer has to sit down with the labor union official; they have to talk straight with each other, and compromise. Second, everybody gets a chance to talk. So they "vent their spleen" in the discussion groups, not in the question-and-answer period that the Extension educator has to handle.

Of the four approaches to public policy education that I have observed over the years, I believe the effective Extension public policy educator will make best use of the alternatives-consequences method. I have had people say, "Flinchbaugh, you are a fraud. You always put your favorite alternative last." That is not true. I always begin with the same option, though. One alternative to every public policy issue is the status quo. Have you not heard people say, "We like things the way they are; don't rock the boat"?

Because nobody is perfectly objective, some argue that the alternatives-consequences approach is really a fraud. It is true, nobody is perfectly objective. We all see the world through our own eyes; we all have blinders on; and we are products of our environment. But I have had decisionmaker after decisionmaker say to me, "Your contribution is that you are the only one who is working at being objective." As an educational institution, Cooperative Extension is the only public organization that does not have a vested interest in public issues.

If you, as a public policy educator, follow this objective educational route, you are going to have trouble getting along with some of the Kings, since you may pose a threat to them. You are especially going to have trouble with the paid employees of special-interest groups, because they like to spread their propaganda all over town. But, you will have no difficulty with boards of directors and chief executive officers of organizations because the Kingmakers and the real decisionmakers understand the importance of objective information.

## The "Ten Commandments"

I gave a seminar at Olive Branch, Mississippi, a few years ago, and the gentleman in charge came up with the idea that we needed a set of laws or principles for public policy education. So I sat down and wrote what I call the "ten commandments of public policy education." They are:

1. *Get acquainted.* Keep in constant touch with fellow professionals, local leaders, and decisionmakers. If you are going to understand the "teachable moment," the timeliness of the issue, and the place where the educator intervenes and gives a public policy education seminar, you must have your "ear to the ground" constantly. Be sensitive to the pulse of the community. Know what the local leaders and the decisionmakers are thinking. Share successes and failures with your fellow professionals, and be aware of the latest, most up-to-date techniques.

2. *Choose a controversial issue.* Choose a controversial issue in which the "teachable moment" has arrived. Create an educational environment in which to discuss it. I remember going with J. B. Kohlmeyer to a public policy education seminar in Fort Wayne, Indiana, years ago. The issue was school consolidation. And it was hot!—not only the issue but the weather. When we arrived at the meeting place, there was no place to park. In front of the building sat a patrol car. As Kohlmeyer got out of the car, he said to the patrolman, "What are you doing here?" To which the patrolman replied, "I am here to protect the speaker." Kohlmeyer said, "I am the speaker, and you can leave." He walked into the building.

It was warm and the audience was mad. Kohlmeyer first engaged in a little small talk. He had read the Fort Wayne newspaper that morning, so he knew something about what was going on in town other than school consolidation. Then he said, "You are here to talk about school consolidation. That is not the problem; that is not the issue. What I have come to talk about is what quality of education do you want for your children?" The controversy in that room immediately dropped tenfold. They were all in the same ball park, and they all wanted to discuss it rationally. Within two minutes, Kohlmeyer had that group cooled down, and he placed the issue in a decisionmaking framework. Kohlmeyer put the problem on the blackboard—"What quality of education do you want for your children?" He then listed the alternatives, one of which was to consolidate the schools. That highway patrolman could not believe it, and on the way out of the building he said, "I really thought we were going to have a battle here tonight." The audience all left happy. The issue was put in a decisionmaking framework. An educational environment had been created.

3. *Do your homework.* Assemble a multidisciplinary team, if necessary. Understand the problem and establish the facts. Outline all possible alternatives and consequences. Become the number one disseminator of the facts. Knowledge is powerful. When you walk into a room to present a public policy education seminar on a controversial subject, know more about the subject than anyone else. If you do not, you are in trouble.

4. *Work within the system.* Understand the system; use it; know who the Kingmakers are; and talk their language—not academic jargon. Learn to use the media effectively. They can help. But, if you get crosswise with them, they can destroy your credibility.

Extension public policy education, based on the alternatives-consequences approach, actually began when Professors Kohlmeyer and Bottum conducted a meeting in the early 1930s on the concept of a Federal Farm Board, basically the first set of price and income policies for agriculture. They went to Chicago and held a meeting. That night, the *Chicago Tribune* headlined, "Purdue Professors Chastise Hoover." The Director of Extension at Purdue University at that time was a close confidant of President Hoover. Here were two young, nontenured university professors who knew they were in trouble! They hurried home to the Lafayette, Indiana, train station and bought every copy of the *Chicago Tribune* shipped into town that day. They decided that was the last time they were going to take a stand on a public issue. Their approach thereafter was to outline the alternatives and their probable consequences, rather than to advocate a particular solution.

Develop an understanding of the needs and workings of the media. Work with their deadlines. Cultivate relationships with members of the press. They have a tough job. Work with them; help them. A prepared press release makes a reporter's job easier. Never, ever publicly chastise a reporter. They have the power of the front page, whereas you might get a letter to the editor published.

I had an experience a few years ago, on the severance tax issue. After outlining the seven consequences of the severance tax, a cub news reporter said, "Professor, the Governor was in town last week, and he disagrees with five of your points. Who is right?" I said, "I didn't hear what the Governor had to say. I wasn't at the meeting, but I stand by what I said." The next day, the pitch in the news article was that the Governor may fool the people of Kansas, but he did not fool Flinchbaugh. The Governor and I got better acquainted. We understand each other now. But I never once called that news reporter and chastised him. It will backfire; do not do it!

5. *Be objective.* Espouse no cause; align yourself with no one politician, political party, farm organization, or civic group. The minute you do, you compromise your objectivity. Do not impose your values on the public. No one is perfectly objective, but work at it. Your clientele will respect you for it.

6. *Tell it like it is.* Be blunt and to the point, pulling no punches, and without worry about who likes it. Make sure you have the facts, and you will survive. Potshots will be taken at you, but those who understand a mission of an educational institution will come to your rescue. You cannot lose control of meetings. If you put issues in a decisionmaking framework, you rarely will have problems.

7. *Be available.* Do not tell people what to do. Help them do what they want to do. Put legs on their ideas. Serve as a technician.

8. *Do not be afraid to make predictions.* Challenge people. Explore options with them. In 1973, the Secretary of Agriculture called for fence row to fence row production. We did a series of policy meetings on that issue in which one of the options was to cut back production. I made the statement at that meeting that, if we planted fence row to fence row, the price of wheat would be $2.00/bushel in the fall of 1976. There was an editorial in the *Kansas City Star* the next day—"Damn fool professor predicts $2.00 wheat." My favorite saying is, "If the price of wheat gets high enough, every lawn in Kansas is in jeopardy." Wheat was $2.00/bushel in the fall of 1976, if you subtracted inflation out of it. Mine really was not a very gutsy prediction; it was just basic economics.

9. *Admit mistakes.* Back in the mid-1970s, we published a bulletin on the impact of the use-value appraisal of Kansas farmland in every county and school district in the state. It was a hot issue. The news media wanted those numbers, and they wanted them as soon as they could get them. We released the information, with a press conference, and it was well attended. Every major newspaper, television, and radio station in Kansas was there. Two weeks later, I discovered an error in the computer program. Many numbers in the publication were wrong. That was the toughest weekend I have ever spent in my professional life. Monday morning the Governor was going to use the data; and it is hard to find the Governor over the weekend. But I found him, and I told him there were mistakes in the information. I asked him not to mention the errors, to go ahead with his press conference. I told him the major consequences would be the same, but the numbers were somewhat off. He never mentioned the errors. In fact, at the end of that press conference, he said, "If you want the facts on this issue, go talk to Flinchbaugh."

After revising the study, we called another press conference, which we opened with the statement, ''Computers never make mistakes; human beings do.'' The editorial in the *Wichita Eagle* the next morning applauded us for having the fortitude and the intellect to admit we were wrong. We made so much ''hay'' out of being wrong on that one, that I was tempted to try it again, just for the publicity. We could have covered it up, and probably have gotten away with it. But, if you are wrong, admit it. That keeps your integrity intact.

10. *Be an educator.* In my judgment, you must hold the Jeffersonian value that, if people are educated, they can govern themselves. Be a disseminator of knowledge, rather than a reformer of society according to your values. I think we have learned, in over 200 years, that solving public issues through the collective intelligence and authority of society, is far more acceptable then solving them through the intelligence and authority of any one individual member of society.

John Maynard Keynes made the comment that he would prefer to be governed by a House of Commons picked at random off the streets of London than by the faculty at Cambridge University. Public policy education, in its finest sense, helps the public govern itself through increasing its knowledge and understanding.

# Three Directions for Public Policy Programming

By **Elizabeth Moore**

Public policy education is one of three directions taken by Extension educators in public policy. The other two are advocacy and organizational maintenance. As you are being asked to design a public policy education program that focuses on a public concern, it may be well to define and understand differences among these three directions.

- *Public policy education* is a planned process for providing information, process, and leadership training to clientele.
- *Advocacy* means working for a particular solution to a public problem.
- *Organizational maintenance* is the process of generating support for or retaining public funding for Extension programs.

These three directions have very different goals. However, they often are "lumped" together and labeled generically as public policy programming. In this paper, we have outlined why each of these directions is important, to whom, on what occasions, and what potential problems each may have. It is hoped that, in knowing the differences among these three, you will not inadvertently weave in and out of them in designing your public policy education program, or think they will all lead to the same place. Rather, being able to distinguish among them, you can apply each one when the appropriate occasion arises.

## Public Policy Education

Public policy education is the provision of information, process training, and certain types of leadership skill development by Extension educators to help the public become involved in decisionmaking regarding public issues. Although a variety of components and a range of models are mentioned in the literature about Extension public policy education, the basic thrust of such programs is to help people understand the issue or problem, to explore the alternatives and consequences of various solutions to the problem, to describe the process of making decisions, and to enhance their skills in effecting change.

Of the three directions for public policy programming, public policy education is most consistent with the democratic process. It requires a strong intellectual commitment to that process—and, perhaps, less commitment to a particular issue. For example, after conducting programs that help people better understand the legislative process, the methods of effective citizen involvement, and so on, program participants may proudly report that they are utilizing that information to effect change. Such reports can cause some personal concern to the Extension educator, if citizen action is in support of or against an issue about which the Extension educator may have a strong, opposing, personal commitment. It is unrealistic to think that one can be neutral on an issue, but it is the responsibility of the Extension public policy educator to present the information in a manner that allows for differing viewpoints.

## Advocacy

Advocacy means personally working for a particular solution to a problem, in which an Extension educator proposes one position or supports one group in the policy debate. In *Public Policy Education,* Barrows (n.d.) makes a compelling argument against using such an approach. He delineates the risks for the Extension organization, and discusses the range of possible viewpoints that is presented in most policy issues. An Extension educator whose professional career has been devoted to seeking information on a specific topic may find it difficult, if not impossible, to present the variety of policy alternatives without recommending a particular choice. For example, an Extension Food and Nutrition Specialist might naturally have strong opinions on nutrition monitoring, or the regulation of weight-loss clinics. Or an Extension Family Life Specialist may have a certain base of information and expertise regarding subjects such as child abuse or appropriate and adequate day care. Or there is the expertise of Extension agricultural specialists concerning price support, pesticides, other rural economic issues, and so on. Some Extension specialists assert that they have a responsibility to share their recommendations and the results of their study and research.

## Organizational Maintenance

Organizational maintenance is an aspect of public policy programming that generally garners little discussion. Yet, it is a direction that should not be ignored. When Extension staff members are dealing with public policy education, they are interacting with people and issues tied to the very decisionmaking process that affects the level of funding and, indeed, the very existence of Cooperative Extension. Public policy education is *not* synonymous with maintaining support for Extension. At the same time, it seems counterproductive to assert that there will not be occasions when dilemmas arise related to public policy education and to support for Extension. The very nature of public policy education revolves around conflict; thus, the ongoing potential for questions and concerns related to support for Extension. Consider some of these diverse examples:

- Programming dealing with child-care policies may cause concern from legislators whose definition of family precludes the need for such services. (This same dilemma exists in a variety of other issues.)

- Proposals to lower taxes significantly may adversely affect or, in fact, imperil the very existence of Cooperative Extension. Ironically, some of the strongest Extension supporters often are the proponents of such proposals.

- A local question to levy a tax to support Extension presents a potentially awkward position for Extension staff members.

- Questions may be raised about the wisdom of utilizing the financial support of an organization that lobbies on specific issues (commodity groups, interest groups, and others) to present programming information on policy concerns.

## Some General Observations

As mentioned earlier, it is not unusual for the three directions for public policy programming to overlap in various ways. A few basic principles in public policy programming that should be observed by Extension professionals can be identified:

1. It is imperative that Extension educators establish and maintain a reputation as credible sources of objective educational information. For example, the Cooperative Extension Service at Michigan State University, East Lansing, provides Extension education on all statewide ballot proposals, whether or not they are controversial. Thus, when there is an issue on the ballot that also would affect CES funding, the credibility of CES is already established.

2. There needs to be a clear recognition and delineation between the programming role of public policy education and the administrative role of obtaining support for the Cooperative Extension System. At the state level, it is perhaps easier to make those separations in terms of personnel. Usually, at the state level, an administrator is responsible for budget-related efforts, and a specialist conducts educational programs. At the county level, the distinctions may be considerably less clear—responsibilities and contacts may be focused, at different times, in both directions.

3. There *can* be a clear delineation between an Extension educator's personal opinion and an educational presentation. A County Extension Director commented that the presentations on a tax proposal would be strictly public policy education. But, if in another setting, clientele asked his views, he would not hesitate to express his concern about the potential effects on higher education.

4. There needs to be recognition at all levels of Extension that the audience for programs, particularly leadership development and public policy education programs, may become an active support group for the Cooperative Extension System. But that does not mean that such an outcome is a goal in itself.

The central theme of this discussion has been (1) to define the three directions in public policy programming that Extension has taken in the past, and (2) to suggest that the public policy education direction is and should be the goal for most Extension public policy programming. However, there also is acknowledgement of the times when the other two directions are legitimate—for exercising one's rights as a private citizen or in keeping the Extension organization fiscally healthy. Public policy education, advocacy, and organizational maintenance also may overlap at times. The key is to understand what direction you are selecting, and why. Extension educators' ability to use all three directions discriminately will ultimately increase their credibility when they choose to be public policy educators.

## Reference

Barrows, Richard. n.d. *Public Policy Education.* NCR Publication No. 203. North Central Regional Publications, Ames: Iowa State University.

**Working With Our Publics**

Module 6: Education for Public Decisions

# Instructional Aids

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# Instructional Aids for Module 6

The following instructional aids, developed to accompany Module 6, are provided to assist workshop leaders in conducting effective learning experiences. These materials are referred to in the Leader's Guide and elsewhere in this Module. They are listed here by the unit in which they are used. Workshop leaders may find this checklist helpful in ensuring that all necessary materials are on hand before presenting this Module.

The instructional aids include masters from which transparencies can be made using whatever type of equipment is available locally. Tips on producing transparencies are given on the following page.

## Unit I. Introduction to Public Policy Education

Transparency 1: Thomas Jefferson Quotation

Videotape: "Educating for Public Decisions"

Publication: "Public Policy Education," by R. Barrows
Publication: "Public Policy Education in Extension Home Economics"

## Unit II. Models of Public Policymaking: How Public Policy Is Made in America

Transparency 2: Kings and Kingmakers
Transparency 3: Power Cluster Model
Transparency 4: Stages of Decisionmaking

Videotape: "Kings and Kingmakers"

## Unit III. Facts, Myths, Values, Ethics, and Advocacy

Transparency 5: Framework of a Public Policy
Transparency 6: Means/Ends Framework for Understanding the Public Policy Process

Videotape: "Two Worms: The Importance of Facts, Myths, and Values in Public Policy"

Poster: Two Worms

## Unit IV. Roles for Public Policy Educators

Videotape: "Policy Educators in Extension"

## Unit V. Public Policy Education Methods

Transparency 7: Phases of Issue Evolution
Transparency 8: Cornell Planning Matrix—Situational Analysis
Transparency 9: Cornell Planning Matrix—Possible Educational Programs
Transparencies 10–18—Illustrated Talk
    Transparency 10: Public Policy Education in Extension Is:
    Transparency 11: Criteria for Program Focus
    Transparency 12: Three Directions for Policy Programs
    Transparency 13: Roles
    Transparency 14: Managing Controversy
    Transparency 15: An Educational Program

Transparency 16: Reliability and Credibility
Transparency 17: Why Are We Doing This?
Transparency 18: Thomas Jefferson Quotation

Videotape: "Gratto's Issue Evolution Model"
Videotape: "SHAPES, Egan Style"
Videotape: "A Group Decision Process"
Videotape: "How to Do Policy Education"
Videotape: "Alternatives and Consequences in Extension Home Economics"

## Making Overhead Transparencies From the Transparency Masters

Provided with this module are masters for making transparencies to be used with an overhead projector. The transparencies can be made in one of three ways.

### Method 1: Thermal Process

One of the quickest ways to make overhead transparencies is with a Thermofax copier or similar thermal machine designed for this purpose. The masters themselves, however, cannot be run through the Thermofax. Start by making good quality copies of the masters on an office copier. Then lay a piece of thermal transparency film on top of the copy and run the two sheets through the Thermofax machine together. (*Do not use acetate;* it will melt and destroy your copier.) The resulting positive transparency can be placed in a cardboard frame for durability. By using different types of film, transparencies of various colors can be made.

### Method 2: Diazo Process

As in making transparencies by the Thermofax method, the first step in the diazo process is to make a high-quality copy of the transparency master. For this process, however, the copy must be translucent or transparent. The copy is placed onto a piece of diazo film and exposed in a special light box with an ultraviolet light source. After the proper exposure interval, the film is removed and processed in a jar of ammonia vapor. The completed film can be mounted in a cardboard frame. The color can be varied by using different types of diazo film.

### Method 3: Film Negative Process

This process requires the use of a darkroom and a copy camera capable of handling large originals and negatives. No preliminary copying of the transparency masters is necessary. The masters themselves are photographed on 8 1/2-by-11-inch high-contrast line film at full size using the copy camera. After the film negative has been processed, the image will appear as clear areas on a black background. The negative can be mounted in a cardboard frame and used to project a white image on a black background or backed with an adhesive gel such as Project-O-Film to produce a colored image. This approach is ideal for situations in which the image is to be revealed one part at a time during projection; opaque flaps can be taped to the frame to cover the various parts of the image and turned back one at a time.

# Videotape Script
## Policy Educators in Extension

Approximate Length—30 minutes, to be shown in two 15-minute segments.
Ellipses ( . . . ) indicate where sections of the script have been omitted to save space.

| AUDIO | VIDEO |
|---|---|
| Music up | City council meeting<br>Newspaper |
| We all feel the effects of public policy. Important decisions are made every day. Decisionmakers determine our quality of life. Since its beginning, Cooperative Extension has been involved in public policy education. That is, educating citizens to make the best possible public decisions. This videotape examines public policy education. What makes it different from other Extension programs? And, in what roles do Extension faculty serve as pubic policy educators? | Gavel<br>TV news shot<br>Family shot<br>Wheat farm<br>Ex. Bltn. Govt. Day<br>Specialist before group<br>CU of Extension faculty speaker |
| Just as in other Extension education programs, public policy educators may be involved as: | CU—Extension faculty roles |
| information providers | (CG) Information providers |
| educational program developers | Educational Prog. Devel. |
| advisors | Advisors |
| process trainers | Process trainers |
| forecasters | Forecasters |
| These roles take on new meaning when placed within the framework of public policy education—Why? Because there are basic differences between public policy education and other Extension programs. | CU of Extension faculty working with group |
| Dick Barrows, University of Wisconsin Extension Ag. Economics Specialist, and Ron Knutson, Texas A&M Extension Agriculture Economics Specialist, explain those differences. | |
| "One is that it is a group decision . . . so public policy education always involves conflict or disagreement?" | CU—Dick Barrows<br>(CG. Dick Barrows, University of Wisconsin) |
| "It seems to me the biggest thing that makes them different—there are values that underlie people's thinking on public policy education. . . . And so you get a variation." | CU—Ron Knutson<br>(CG. Ron Knutson, Texas A&M) |

| | |
|---|---|
| Let's look at examples of Extension programs where agents and specialists are involved in public policy education. | *Split screen in thirds:*<br>Wisconsin farm, Alamo, Hood Canal |
| In Wisconsin, the focus is on developing new policies to meet the tremendous changes in agriculture and rural communities. | Wisconsin farm scenes |
| Programs include national fiscal and monetary policy, federal and state tax policy, and rural development. | |
| We saw a sample of the tax policy program at a single day's event sponsored by two Wisconsin agricultural agents. | MS—Meeting with Barrows giving presentation |
| The specialists involved prepare farmers, elected officials, and other citizens to make intelligent policy choices in the crisis atmosphere of the farm economy. | |
| Barrows explains the role of Extension faculty in public policy education. | Still of CU of Barrows |
| "We're not people who try to propose solutions to the problem or anything like that. . . . And we need to do the same kinds of things in public policy. We can do that. . . . But I think we have to stop short of becoming advocates for those ideas in the political process!!" | CU—Dick Barrows interview<br>CG—Dick Barrows |
| But what makes an educator different from an advocate in the public policy arena? | B-roll—Barrows presenting |
| "An advocate has a point of view . . . step outside of values . . . if you do that." | CU—Barrows interview |
| Joanne Jensen, Wisconsin Extension Homemaker, cow/calf beef farmer, and participant in the tax policy event, reinforces the neutrality issues as an Extension public policy educator. | Still of CU of Barrows<br>CU—Joanne Jensen (CG—Joanne Jensen, Merrimac, Wisconsin) |
| "I think that's a prime requisite for being Extension people, is being neutral on this kind of thing. . . . I like the way they work." | |
| In light of the fact that public policy education involves controversial subjects—that is, issues—it's important to look at how Extension faculty can deal with that controversy. | Footage—Barrows and audience |

| | |
|---|---|
| "I think #1 it's important to recognize . . . for them to take different positions. . . . #2 basic respect for individuals and their position . . . making sure you leave your own prejudices and values out of it." | CU—Barrows interview<br>B-footage—audience (to cover edit)<br>CU—Barrows interview |
| Participants in Wisconsin explain how they will use the public policy discussion on tax policy. | Still—Becky Gutzman |
| "Well, I serve on the Board of Directors of our local electric cooperative . . . that's affecting our farmer in the state right now." | CU—Becky Gutzman interview (CG—Becky Gutzman, Rio, Wis.) |
| "First of all we have an Extension Homemakers meeting tonight . . . but also how federal government effects everday things." | CU—Joanne Jensen interview (CG—Joanne Jensen, Merrimac, Wis.) |
| Just how do you measure changes in participants of public policy education programs? | B-footage—audience in Wisconsin |
| "Some of the obvious ways: new ideas injected into the system, discussion of policy alternatives, ideas adopted. . . . Better discussion, better policy discussions out of process." | CU—Dick Barrows interview<br>(CG—Dick Barrows) |
| We've introduced you briefly to public policy education in Wisconsin. Barrows concludes by explaining the broader concept of public policy education. | B-footage—meeting |
| "As a state specialist it may mean different things than at the county level. . . . I think it involves some applied research. . . . To me it's much more than just a meeting." | CU—Barrows interview |
| From Wisconsin we move to Texas, where Texas A&M Extension Ag Economics Specialist Ron Knutson approaches public policy education in three ways. | Alamo footage |
| "One is when the people decide what alternative they want in public policy. It is an alternative-consequence approach. One of them is in terms of explaining to people impact . . . out of that program as a producer. The third one is sort of a futuristic . . That's what I was doing today." | CU—Ron Knutson<br>(CG—Ron Knutson, Texas A&M University) |
| "I'm going to talk about tomorrow, I'm going to talk about what . . . at the implications of those expectations for cooperatives." | B-footage w/audience |

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| Knutson made this presentation at the Texas Agricultural Council Workshop for Cooperative Leadership in Kerrville, Texas. Members of that audience responded to the question—How do Extension faculty help you in the public policy arena? | B-footage—CU Texas Agricultural Council logo |
| "We call on them regularly for technical presentations . . . to fit in with the scenario that is most likely to prevail in the future. We want the thing down to very workable tools of the trade . . . present it to us in a form we can utilize." | CU—J. Cooper interview (CG—J. B. Cooper, Jr., Roscoe, Texas) |
| "We want information . . . we can have an easier road to travel as we try programs." | CU—LaMarr Ramsey interview (CG—LaMarr Ramsey, Plainview, Texas) |
| One danger in public policy education is the client perceiving you are telling them what to do. We asked Texas Ag. Coop. leaders their perceptions and we asked Knutson how he remains the objective educator. | B-footage—Knutson presentation—answering questions |
| "They are careful not to give us a prescription of . . . the options which are going to be there." | CU—J. B. Cooper, Jr., interview (CG—J. B. Cooper, Jr., Roscoe, Texas) |
| "He's more or less outlining our options . . . left up to each individual." | CU—L. C. Unfred interview (CG—L. C. Unfred, New Homer, Texas) |
| "I think the key to objectivity is one of presenting . . . that's the key to being objective." | CU—Ron Knutson interview (CG—Ron Knutson, Texas A&M) |
| Let's look again at the role of Extension faculty in public policy education. | B-footage—Knutson presentation |
| "Well the main thing I see as my role . . . respect to the kinds of government programs they'd like to see in agriculture." | CU—Ron Knutson interview |
| "I think that from Extension's standpoint . . . help them come to their own conclusions about what policy issues they want to support." | CU—Roland Smith interview (CG—Roland Smith, Texas A&M) |
| We asked Knutson, "How do you determine what issue to center a public policy education program around?" | B-footage—Knutson at overhead |

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| "I look at it much more in the process of what should people be interested in? . . . to people and try to operate in that arena rather than just the current situation . . . what's going to be hot tomorrow. The danger is you pick an issue . . . and that's always a problem." | CU—Knutson interview<br>B-footage—to cover edit |
| As Extension faculty, we try to monitor changes in our clients as a result of an educational program. What kind of changes can you expect in clients as a result of a public policy education program? | B-footage<br>CU—audience |
| "I have two types of clients . . . a willingness to advocate. When it comes to congressmen or policymakers themselves . . . on what impact of that proposal is." | CU—Knutson interview<br>B-footage to cover edit |

**STOP TAPE FOR DISCUSSION**

| AUDIO | VIDEO |
|---|---|
| Because home economists have been process oriented, they are adding a new dimension and are legitimizing the process role faculty play in public policy education. | B-footage |
| Several leadership programs developed recently through assistance from foundation funds are resulting in another approach to public policy education. | FCL—footage |
| One of those is the Family Community Leadership Program in Washington State: The focus is on developing leadership skills and the ability to be educators before graduates influence public policy. | Washington State footage—Hood Canal<br>CU—FCL participant |
| [James Barron comment] | CU—James Barron interview (CG—James Barron, Washington State University) |
| Research conducted to evaluate the FCL program in Washington shows that involvement in the program increased self-confidence and knowledge in public affairs. So, after fulfilling a commitment to the program, participants naturally get involved in making public decisions in their communities. | B-footage FCL—pan across room with participants |
| "We had a problem with children in the street . . . and it was really easy." | CU—Lyria Miller interview (CG—Lyria Miller, Family Community Leadership Program, Washington State) |

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| "Been stimulated to be involved in my community . . . concerning the issue." | CU—Rick Wallace interview (CG—Rick Wallace, Family Community Leadership, Washington State University) |
| "There was a group . . . because they were in the planning." | CU—Lyria Miller interview (CG—Lyria Miller) |
| FCL participants learn how to put on public forums, give testimony, analyze issues, and develop educational programs around issues. | B-footage FCL |
| "How to analyze, look at an issue . . . and carry it forward." | CU—Lyria Miller interview (CG—Lyria Miller) |
| "I learned how to deal with a lot of personalities . . . how to speak in front of groups without shaking." | CU—Kitty Carlsen interview (CG—Kitty Carlsen, Family Community Leadership Program, Washington State) |
| "So it was . . . I learned through FCL." | CU—Rick Wallace interview (CG—Rick Wallace) |
| Some Extension faculty, such as Kelsey Gray and Ron Faas, help train FCL participants. Extension faculty also are participants, along with a variety of other adults. A unique feature of the FCL program is faculty and volunteers working together as a team learning and providing public policy education. | B-footage—Kelsey Gray and Ron Faas, Extension Specialists, Washington State University |
| "I was really negative about that at first . . . group brings to this project." | CU—Sally Weinschrott interview (CG—Sally Weinschrott, County Chairman, CES, Washington State University) |
| "I knew Extension agents existed, but just barely . . . continuing education aspect of Cooperative Extension." | CU—Ginnie Brockman interview (CG—Ginnie Brockman, Family Community Leadership, Washington State University) |
| "I saw them sort of in a different light . . . produced something even better." | CU—Lyria Miller interview (CG—Lyria Miller) |
| "We have been able . . . could get some things done." | CU—Kitty Carlsen interview (CG—Kitty Carlsen) |

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| Three states—three approaches to public policy education in Extension, illustrating how, as Extension educators, we help people learn how to make better public decisions. | Split screen—three scenes from each state |
| In Wisconsin—where Extension provides information programs for producers who look at alternatives and consequences in tax policy. | Wisconsin scene<br>(CG)* Information provider |
| In Texas—where projections, based on research, give agribusiness leaders information to make better agribusiness decisions for the future. | (CG) Texas scene<br>*Advisor<br>*Forecaster |
| In Washington State—where Family Community Leadership participants learn and teach public policy skills alongside Extension faculty. Participants can use those skills to influence public policy affecting their own lives. | Washington State<br>(CG)*Process Trainer<br>*Educational Program Developer |
| Whether we realize it or not, all Extension faculty are or can be involved in public policy education to help families, producers, communities manage the change surrounding and affecting them. | B-footage—Gray, Faas<br>CU—FCL participants |
| As Extension faculty, it's our responsibility to understand our role and perfect the approaches we need to be effective public policy educators. | B-footage—Knutson, Barrows |
| | CG Credits |

**Producer: Debra Lorenzen**
**Writers: Debra Lorenzen and Ardis Young**
Washington State University, 1986

*Richard Barrows*

NCR publication #203

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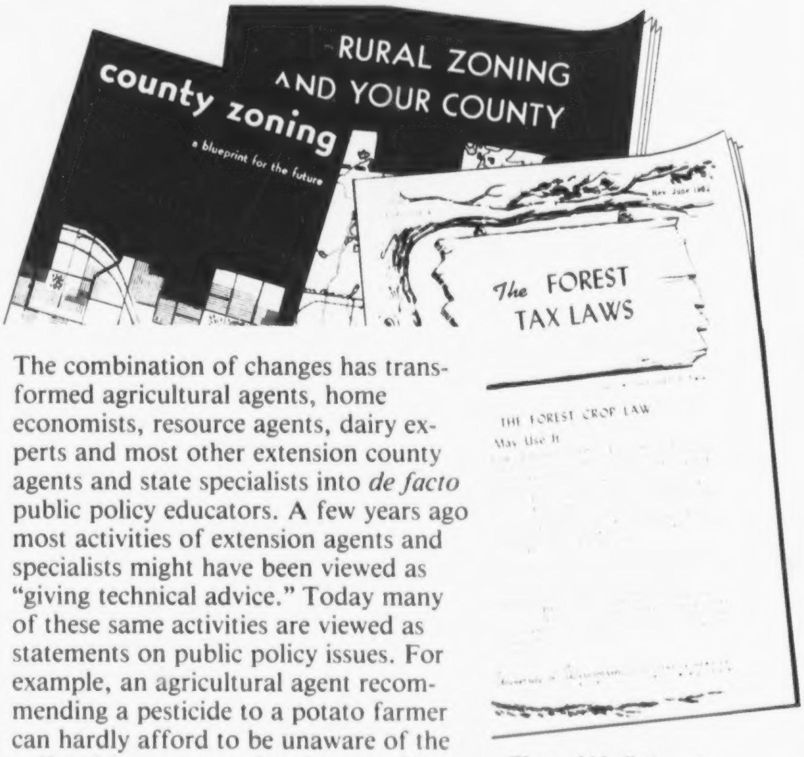
# PUBLIC POLICY EDUCATION:
## KEY CONCEPTS AND METHODS

Public policy education is an extension program that applies the knowledge of the university to public issues and educates citizens to enable them to make better-informed policy choices.

Public policy education is not new for Extension. At least as early as the 1920s extension educators were working with rural people on land use policy. Over the past six decades many of the policy issues have changed, but some have remained remarkably the same. Rural land use, taxation, management of public lands, local economic development policy, agricultural policy and many other public issues have been with us for many decades. To this list we could add programs on nutrition and health policy, many issues involving social welfare, poverty, employment and a myriad of environmental policy concerns. Some of the methods of extension educators are new, such as the Educational Telephone Network, public television, or the statewide computer communications network. However, some methods are still the same—a county agent, a state specialist, some farmers and other local citizens meet in the town hall in the dead of winter to discuss some major issue facing the town, the county, the state or the nation.

The need for policy education and the public's demand for information on public issues is probably greater today than anytime in the past. Changes in communication technology have made people much more aware of what is happening outside their local area, and how they are affected by changes in the state capital, the national economy or international trade. Citizens are also much more aware of the environmental impacts of activities such as manufacturing, forestry or agriculture. Finally, local, state and federal governments have assumed a much greater role in matters such as managing the economy, protecting the public health and social welfare and improving the quality of the environment. People are increasingly interested in public policy issues and the activities of government.



*These old bulletins are one example of Extension's long tradition of dealing with public policy education.*

The combination of changes has transformed agricultural agents, home economists, resource agents, dairy experts and most other extension county agents and state specialists into *de facto* public policy educators. A few years ago most activities of extension agents and specialists might have been viewed as "giving technical advice." Today many of these same activities are viewed as statements on public policy issues. For example, an agricultural agent recommending a pesticide to a potato farmer can hardly afford to be unaware of the policy debate concerning the use of certain pesticides and environmental protection. The agent's "technical" advice, especially if he expands his efforts to include a public defense of farm chemicals, will be viewed by many (perhaps even a majority) as equivalent to taking a policy position against environmental protection. Extension agents

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[1] Several people have contribued to the ideas in this bulletin. Glen Pulver and Bill Saupe, Department of Agricultural Economics, and Steve Born, Bud Jordahl and John Roberts, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Wisconsin-Extension, provided some very thoughtful comments on an earlier draft. Larry Libby, Michigan State University, Vern House, Montana State University, and Barry Flinchbaugh, Kansas State University, also made several good suggestions for improving the manuscript. Rusty Roland, Cornell University, provided several additional references and other comments. The author is responsible for any and all errors of fact or interpretation.

and specialists must be aware that at least part of their work involves public policy issues. *Almost all Extension agents and specialists are involved in policy, even if they do not realize it, and regardless of whether they like it or not.*[2]

Extension's opportunity, or obligation, to educate the public on the major public policy issues of our day is the subject of this publication. The philosophical basis for Extension involvement will be very briefly reviewed. To be successful in public policy education, the educator must hold certain values, and these will be very quickly discussed. Some organizational issues – prerequisites for successful involvement – will be briefly explored. The questions of what issues to choose, when to teach, whom to teach and how to teach will be discussed. The purpose of the entire publication is to stimulate thought and discussion on the opportunities and pitfalls inherent in public policy education and some of the practical issues involved in conducting policy education programs.[3]

***Even a highly technical subject may involve policy issues best handled in a public policy education framework.***

Pesticides often kill more than pests on state farms

# PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS FOR EXTENSION PUBLIC POLICY EDUCATION

## EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Public policy education rests on a specific concept of the Land Grant University and its role in a democratic society. The Land Grant University in general, and Extension in particular, is concerned with the problems of people and is committed to using the knowledge of the University of improve the quality of life for the people of the state. Lest we think of Extension's mission too narrowly, it is useful to recall the 1915 statement of Chairman Butterfield of the original Land Grant Committee on Extension: "It will give farmers light upon taxation as well as upon tree pruning. The rural school will have as much attention as corn breeding. . ."[4] In many states this tradition has been upheld for many decades.

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[2] Vern House brought to my attention a very similar argument by James Hildreth of the Farm Foundation: "All education, in one way or another involves public policy issues. This statement has become more clear in recent years. Many of the topics which used to be considered objective technical subject matter are now policy issues. . . Thus, whether you want to be in public policy education or not, you are." James R. Hildreth "Why Do Policy Education" in *Proceedings of the Southern Regional Public Policy Education Workshop*. J.B. Williams, ed., Southern Rural Development Center, Mississippi, April, 1980.

[3] For a thorough discussion of these issues and some examples of public policy education programs, see Verne M. House, *Shaping Public Policy: The Educator's Role*, Westridge Publishing, P.O. Box 310, Bozeman, Montana, 1981.

[4] Quoted in R.L. Reeder, "Rethinking Public Policy Education" *Journal of Extension*, Spring, 1970, p. 18.

Public policy education is also based on a pluralist view of the democratic political process in which there are numerous individual interests and interest groups and many decision-makers with potentially conflicting interests in the various branches of government. Public policy decisions are viewed as compromises among these divergent interests. This is an extremely important concept because it implies that there is no single public interest and no optimal policy choice. The fact that there is debate means that the perceived interests of different groups conflict, giving rise to the policy issue. Any solution or resolution of the debate will favor some groups and hurt (or not help) others.[5] Scientific knowledge, the wisdom of the university, cannot be used to determine the "correct" policy choice for society because science cannot supply the value judgement that ranks the interests of one group as more important than the interests of others. This philosophical position will have important implications for teaching methods, discussed below.

Finally, public policy education is based on a philosphical concept of the value of public participation in governmental decisions. It is assumed that if the democratic process is to function effectively, the citizenry must be well-informed of the major issues of the day, and must have the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process. These ideas did not originate with Extension. Plato argued that education was the key to developing good policy and social conditions in his ideal Greek city-state. Thomas Jefferson placed great faith in education and the importance of a well-educated and well-informed citizenry as the basis for representative democracy.[6]

## *THE EDUCATOR'S VALUES*

To be effective in public policy education, the educator must operate on the basis of certain values and beliefs about human behavior, the democratic process and the role of education in a free society. The educator may recognize these values explicitly, or the values and beliefs may simply be implicit in his actions.

**Enlightened Self-Interest.** First, the educator must be willing to believe that *enlightened self-interest* is a reasonable guide to individual behavior. The educator must believe that individuals generally know when they are better or worse off, are able to use whatever knowledge they have to decide which courses of action are most likely to leave them better off, and are willing to try to act accordingly. Enlightened self-interest is most effective in guiding behavior if individuals have sufficient knowledge of current conditions and the consequences of various possible changes—precisely the type of information provided in a good public policy education program. The enlightened self-interest assumption should not be too difficult for most educators to accept.

***A public policy education campaign must be objective and as unbiased as possible. But it will rarely be politically neutral.***

B.-Wolfgang Hoffmann

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[5] Occasionally a policy issue will arise in which all groups could be made better off by some particular policy choice. Conflict occurs either because the participants in the debate are not aware of this option or because one or more of the groups favor an alternative that would make them even better-off, but that would hurt other groups (or benefit them much less), compared to the alternative in which all groups would benefit.

[6] One of Jefferson's most widely quoted statements on education is contained in a letter to William Jarvis, September 28, 1820, in which Jefferson wrote: "I know or no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education."

Enlightened self-interest does not mean that people are totally selfish. In fact, some amount of benevolence, trust and respect for the rights of others is necessary for any society to survive. For the policy educator, believing in the principle of enlightened self-interest simply means believing that people have the basic intelligence or common sense to be able to identify the best policy alternative, where each individual defines "best" in terms of his own preferences. Sometimes an individual's policy choice may be dictated strictly by his own narrow economic interest. At other times individuals may favor a policy because they believe it is best for society or morally right, even though their own interest would be harmed if the policy were adopted. In the end, a belief in enlightened self-interest reduces to the proposition that individuals know their own preferences and are able to make judgements about which policies will have results that are most in accord with their own preferences—or at least that individuals are able to make these judgements for themselves better than anyone else could make the judgements for them. In this scheme, knowledge of policy alternatives and consequences is absolutely essential for intelligent choice, and this is the purpose of public policy education.

**Democratic Process.** A second necessary belief for the public policy educator is that the democratic process is a reasonable way to make decisions when not all parties are agreed on the most preferable course of action. Public policy education is based on the assumption that a well-informed citizenry is crucial to the democratic process and that the democratic process is a reasonable means of making decisions about matters in which the interests of various groups in society conflict. Although most educators subscribe to these beliefs, it is certainly legitimate to raise questions about whose interests are served by the political process and whether all interests are fairly represented.[7]

Actually, the public policy educator does not need to subscribe to the belief that the current version of the democratic process in the local community or state works perfectly. All that is necessary is the belief that the democratic process is a more reasonable means of making decisions than administrative fiat or the dictates of a single individual.

Most important, the educator must believe that (s)he does not possess the wisdom to always make the right choice for society. The public policy educator must value highly the right of individuals to make their own choices. In the end, (s)he must have some faith that a well-informed citizenry and the democratic process will produce a choice that is right for society, or at least produce a right choice more often than any other decision-making method.

# *PRACTICAL CONCERNS*

If the educator's personal values are consistent with the philosophy outlined above, then it is appropriate to shift attention to more practical questions about beginning a public policy education program. There are a few prerequisites for a successful program. Assuming these prerequisites are met, the educator must ask: "How do I know *what issues* to tackle? How do I know *when* to plan and when to teach? *Whom* do I teach?" These more practical concerns are the subject of this section.

## *PREREQUISITES*

There are a few simple prerequisites for a successful public policy education program. These are *necessary* conditions for success, but not in themselves sufficient. Without these a program is likely to fail, but meeting these conditions does not guarantee success. The prerequisites involve conflict, institutional support and information.

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[7] James Laue has argued that if certain groups are not properly represented in the current version of the democratic process, Extension should make a special effort to include these groups in its educational programs. This point will be discussed later in this publication. (See James Laue "Value-Free, Objective Educators" in *Coping With Conflict*, North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, Iowa State University, 1979.

**Conflict.** Public policy education deals with issues that are controversial. A decision that is to be made by government becomes a policy issue precisely because there is controversy, a conflict among individuals and groups about the best course of action to pursue. For example, a decision to take bids on harvesting part of a state forest is usually not controversial—it is not a policy issue. But when certain individuals and groups object to timber harvest in a certain area because it destroys scenery and wilderness, *then* the matter may become a policy issue of some importance to county government. If there is no controversy, no conflict, there is no policy issue. So by definition, policy education deals with public questions or decisions over which of these are disagreements and conflicting interests. No matter how objective the public policy educational program, it is likely that some individuals or groups will object to the effort, if for no other reason than that the educational program makes the issue more visible. Besides, even absolutely factual information is rarely politically neutral.

**Support.** Extension as an organization must be willing, and able, to withstand the controversy and criticism that even the best public policy education project may create.[8] Past experience suggests that there is strong support for public policy education among the leaders of Extension, and that Extension administrators will support county agents and state specialists if a good educational program draws fire in the political arena.

Because public policy education can be controversial, it pays to establish a good foundation for the program both within Extension and among outside groups. At the state level, this means informing Extension administrators and colleagues that a program is being planned. Even for the most independent state specialists that is not a particularly odious requirement and in fact will usually occur without too much conscious effort.

For county extension agents, in addition to informing colleagues and administrators, the support of the county board's agriculture and extension education committee is extremely important. Experienced agents are usually experts in involving their committee members in policy education programs. Generally it is easier to obtain support if committee members understand the basic philosophy of public policy education before any specific issue arises. In many counties Extension has a long history of involvement in public policy education and it may be relatively easy to obtain committee support. In other counties it may be much more difficult to convince the committee members that Extension has a legitimate role in dealing with policy issues.

**Information.** A second step in building a good foundation for a policy education program is to inform key individuals and groups on all sides of the issue that an educational program is being planned. In fact, many extension programs in policy education evolve because state specialists and county agents are already interacting with various groups and individuals with an interest in the policy issue. Again, it will be very easy and natural to inform the various interests that a program is planned. The broader the audience and the more widespread the interest in the policy issue, the more important it becomes to touch base with all the relevant interests. For example, if the audience is the voting public, the issue is a state tax limitation referendum, and the mass media will be used to disseminate information, it may be quite important to touch base with all the major interests before beginning. On the other hand, if the issue is national marketing policies for cranberries and the audience is cranberry growers it may be less important to inform all possible interest groups of the plan for an educational program. (It still may be important to inform all the relevant factions among the cranberry growers). Although it may not always be *necessary* to inform a broad range of interests about a policy education program it may be *useful* to do so and may help build the perception that Extension educators make a sincere effort to maintain objectivity and neutrality in policy education. The only danger is that some important interests or key individuals are *not* informed, either because of oversight, because they had not been interacting with extension staff, or because the extension specialist or agent has already "taken sides" in the policy debate. In these cases the program and the extension educators are more likely to face charges of bias or political favoritism.

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[8] Ron Powers, currently associate Extension Director in Iowa, has argued that Extension really has little choice in the matter: "My own view is that an extension system that purposefully avoid issues and arenas where conflict exists is doomed to mediocrity. . .viable, growing organizations must serve emerging needs and issues and incur some risk because the alternative of being 'safe' is, in reality, also 'risky.' " Ronald C. Powers, "Social Conflict in Community Resource Development and Public Policy Education" in *Coping With Conflict*, North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa, 1979.

The basic point is this: (1) the subject matter of public policy education is policy *issues*; (2) issues arise because of conflict among interest groups; (3) it is possible that the policy education program will itself become part of the controversy over the issue; (4) one way to help minimize the probability of this occurrence is to touch base with interest group leaders on the various sides of the debate, *before* beginning the educational program. Other ways to reduce the probability of becoming a target for political flak will be discussed later.

## *WHAT ISSUES TO CHOOSE?*

Public policy education is issue- or problem oriented, as distinguished from extension programs that provide general information or technical training. An appropriate issue must have several characteristics.

**Public Concern.** Most important, the issue must be an important *policy question*, and the object of some public concern or debate. It is useless to try to design an educational program around something perceived as an issue only by the educator or a small group of Extension faculty. The issue must be perceived as important by a significant part of the intended audience; otherwise people will not spend the time, energy, and money to become better informed on the issue.

Issues that are defined by what extension educators are trained to do, or issues that are defined by the puzzles of an academic discipline are not likely to lead to successful public policy education programs. Similarly, the educator may correctly identify an important policy question which must be decided, but if it is not defined as an issue by the intended audience, a policy education program is not likely to be successful. For example, the use of federal lands in Alaska was an important policy issue debated at the national level in the late 1970's and early 1980's. However, it was not an important policy issue as perceived by most people in rural Wisconsin, so a public policy education program designed to reach the general public would have failed. But a similar program designed for environmental groups might have succeeded.

**Whose Issue?** This raises the question of *who* is "the public" that defines the issue. Clearly, it cannot be the extension educator alone or an extension committee. But it is also not necessary to have widespread concern among the general public in order to have a successful policy education program. It may be quite appropriate for an extension educator to work with a small number of key people who *do* see an issue and are struggling to resolve it. The issue may later capture the attention of a large segment of the general public, or a large segment of some interest group, such as the cranberry growers or town government officials. For example in Wisconsin, agricultural land taxation was perceived as a policy issue by only a handful of legislators and farm leaders in ear-

***Part of the educator's role is to find the "teachable moment" – the point where the issue begins to attract public attention, but before everyone has taken a firm or rigid position.***

ly 1974 and a small-scale policy education program was conducted. By 1975 the topic was widely perceived as a policy issue by farmers, environmentalists, local officials and many others and a much larger-scale program was organized. The basic point is that the issue must be perceived by the *public*, and particularly by the part of the public that is the intended audience for the public education program.

Issues change, and so must public policy education programs. In some cases, as a policy debate begins to form around an issue, the extension program might be designed to help people more clearly define the problem. As the issue sharpens, the debate may focus on the policy alternatives and consequences. Later, the issue may be resolved, at least temporarily, by some executive or legislative decision, and the extension program may change to provide information on what has been decided. Often a decision may simply shift the policy issue and debate from one level of government to another, and the policy education program can simply shift accordingly. In some cases, the original policy decision will later be re-evaluated and the policy education program may shift once again. There is no formula for determining the most appropriate stage of the issue to conduct an educational program. Any or all of the issue stages may be appropriate, but the program must be designed accordingly.[9]

**Values and Knowledge.** Not all public policy issues are appropriate for a public policy education program. Obviously, the educator must have some knowledge of the policy issue, or be able to obtain information from others. Also, the intended audience must need the information or analysis.

In general, the more an issue can be analyzed using university research or academic methodology, the more it suits a policy education program. However, this argument should not be taken to an extreme. All the facts pertinent to an issue are never available, so if any educational programs are ever to be conducted it will always be with an incomplete factual record.

Sometimes an issue may be intensely debated, but all the information, analysis and knowledge of the university may already be known by the participants in the debate. The facts are known, but differing values lead different groups to opposite positions on the issue. In these cases the extension educator has little to add. Science cannot be used to identify the most appropriate set of values. Even in this case a policy education program might have been useful at some earlier stage of the debate, before all groups had the relevant knowledge.

This does not mean that extension policy educators never deal with values. No policy issue is ever divorced from the values, beliefs and emotions of the participants in the debate. This is appropriate, because even an undisputed fact will be viewed quite differently by people with different values and interests. But often the facts get confused with the values, hopes, emotions and general misconceptions of the participants. Part of the job of the policy educator is to help people separate fact from values, beliefs, wishful-thoughts, misconceptions and emotions. The values and emotions are appropriately included in the policy debate but a better understanding and analysis of the factual record can help everyone focus more clearly on the essence of the disagreement.

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[9] For a good discussion of issue cycles see Charles P. Gratto, "Public Policy Education – A Model with Emphasis on How," in *Increasing Understanding of Public Problems and Policies-1973*, Farm Foundation, Chicago, 1973. In that same publication the paper by B.L. Flinchbaugh ("Public Policy Education – A Model with Emphasis on What and When") and James C. Barron ("Public Policy Education – Whom Do We Teach") are also useful to read.

## WHEN TO TEACH?

Some times are better than others for teaching about public policy issues. It is useless to attempt to educate people about a policy issue which they do not think is particularly relevant, important or pressing. On the other hand, if the policy debate has progressed (or degenerated) to the point where everyone has a strong opinion, leaders have expressed strong stands, personalities are closely entwined with specific positions, emotional outbursts are frequent and the debate is bitter and rancorous, an objective educational program may be ignored by almost everyone. There is a point most people have taken a position and no one wants to be confused (or embarrassed) by the facts. Policy education may not be impossible in these situations, but the effectiveness and the probability for success are much higher if the program is delivered before all the participants have publicly taken strong stands, and debate is less rigid and emotional.

Thus, the educator must seek the teachable moment—the time at which the issue is hot enough to capture people's interest, but not so hot that everyone's decision is made and the debate is becoming bitter. Taking advantage of the teachable moment means the educator must be able to foresee important issues and prepare educational materials before the issue becomes the center of public attention. In effect, the educator must invest his/her time and energy gambling that the issue will develop in a manner suitable for a public policy education program. This makes public policy education a high-risk operation. One determinant of success is the accuracy of the educator's predictions (or guesses) about future issues.

Identifying a good issue for a policy education program is more art than science. There are no secret tricks or simple worksheets for predicting which issues will be important some months or years into the future. However, many experienced county agents and state specialists are experts in forecasting the issues that will capture the attention of state and local decision-makers and the general public. These extension educators have one common trait—they listen well. They talk to a large number of people and listen carefully to people's concerns. These concerns are often translated into policy issues, sometimes by alert elected officials who are also listening carefully to their constituents. The ability to predict a future policy issue allows the extension educator to gather and analyze information and prepare educational materials before the "teachable moment" arrives.

The teachable moment concept also implies that the traditional process of statewide extension program planning may not work well for public policy education. Policy issues arise from a rather unpredictable political process. It may not be wise to attempt to predict the policy issues six to eighteen months in advance and then base the program plans of a large number of Extension faculty on these predictions. The probability, and the cost, of an inaccurate prediction might be quite high. On the other hand, it may pay to encourage small ad-hoc groups of specialists and agents to prepare educational materials and plan pilot programs in one or two counties where the agents feel certain the issue will be relevant. If the issue develops into a major state-wide policy debate, it would be relatively easy to expand the educational program statewide. Even if the issue fails to develop as anticipated, the investment in faculty time is minimized and the effort may still have been productive in one or two counties. Other planning models may be more appropriate, but it may be dangerous to rely on traditional planning methods for public policy education programs.

## WHOM TO TEACH?

**Whom** to teach depends on the policy issue. Obviously, not all people are interested in any given issue, so the audience is dictated by the nature of the issue debated. Those most directly affected by the issue are the most likely target audience. However, it is important not to limit the audience to traditional extension clientele. Public policy education offers Extension a chance to expand its clientele – an opportunity which should not be neglected.

**Decision-Makers vs. Public.** A major question in public policy education is whether to focus the educational effort on the key decision-makers in the county and state, or whether to involve the broader public, or segments thereof, in the program. Often extension programs are focused on key decision-makers, based on arguments that: (1) if the goal of policy education is "better-informed judgements" then Extension's limited resources are best used informing those who will make the judgements; (2) the leaders, once educated, will in turn educate the general public; and/or (3) key leaders or decision-makers have the ability to immediately use the knowledge provided by the program.

The argument against focusing on key leaders or decision-makers is that: (1) if democracy is to function, a large cross-section of the citizenry must be aware of public policy issues, alternatives and consequences, so that the people can inform their representatives of their preferences; (2) if extension programs reach only the leaders, there is a danger that the democratic process is reversed – the leaders using the knowledge and information selectively to "explain" the issue, and their decision, to their uninformed constituents. In effect the argument to focus extension resources on decision-makers is equivalent to a trickle-down theory of education. The obvious problem is that the information may not trickle down, or that the information that does trickle down is highly selective and incomplete. The democratic system is based on the assumption that the people, not just the leaders, are able to use information to make intelligent decisions on public policy issues.

Although a strong case can be made against focusing extension public policy education programs exclusively on key leaders, it is sometimes simply not practical to do otherwise. In some cases faculty time or funds are so limited that only a few people can be reached with the program. In other cases a policy decision may be so imminent that there is simply not time to educate the broader public on the issue. Also, the state of the issue may be such that only a few decision-makers are demanding information – the broader public may simply not see the issue at some particular stage of the debate. Thus, whether to focus on leaders or the general public depends very much on the issue, the interest among the general public, the timing of a decision and the faculty time and funds available for the extension program.

**Issues vs. Clientele.** Although most policy educators focus on specific issues, some focus on a specific clientele and deal with all the issues affecting that clientele. Some county agents and state specialists work mostly with one or two clientele groups such as dairy farmers, vegetable growers or small retail merchants.[10] It would be natural for these faculty to focus a public policy education program on the groups they work with most closely. Some policy issues have their biggest impact within such a group, such as dairy price policies or downtown renewal. The agent will have good relations with the group, which will make it easier to talk openly about controversial topics. Focusing on specific clientele may also help build support for extension as an organization. On the other hand, not all issues fall neatly into the realm of one or another of Extension's clientele groups. Also, the extension faculty person may begin to identify too closely with the clientele group, jeopardizing his ability to view policy issues in a neutral, objective manner.

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[10] For a good discussion of some of the points in this section, see Vern House, *Shaping Public Policy*, op.cit., pp. 42-44.

# NEUTRALITY AND OBJECTIVITY

*The only absolute rule in public policy education is that the program and the information must be objective and as neutral as possible.* The extension educator must strive to present the knowledge pertinent to the issue in an objective and unbiased manner. This means that the extension educator must not become an advocate of any specific position in the policy debate.

## TWO MODELS

Teaching in the field of public policy education can follow one of two basic models. The first can be termed the *Advocacy Model*, in which the educator advocates one position or supports one group in the policy debate. The second model is the *Alternatives-Consequences Model*, in which the educator helps people analyze the policy alternatives and likely consequences of each, but does not advocate any particular decision.

**The Advocacy Model** has two variations. The first is rather simple—the educator examines the issue in light of his professional knowledge and his own values, identifies the policy alternative he believes is best for society and argues strongly for his position using his interpretation of the scientific evidence. If the educator works only with one clientele, such as dairy farmers, he may try to identify the policy he thinks would be best for that group.

In its second variation, the Advocacy Model is much more complex and is based on the argument that the extension educator should work to enhance the democratice process.[11] Three basic arguments are used to support this version: (1) the democratic process does not work well unless all groups affected by a decision are represented in the decision-making process; (2) education is never neutral because only those with power can use new knowledge effectively, so education could result in a *less* fair process of decision-making; (3) extension educators must logically either advocate a particular policy *choice*, or must advocate a fair and just democratic *process* by which social choice is made.

Therefore, the final argument is that Extension educators should be advocates of a fair democratic process, which means helping groups without power obtain better representation in the decision-making process.

**The Alternatives-Consequences Model** of policy education has two variations. In the most often used version, the educator helps people clarify the problem or issue, outlines the policy alternatives, presents the likely consequences of each alternative and then leaves the decision to the people and the democratic process. This version is used if: (1) the audience is large; (2) the audience is the general public; or (3) the education message (written or spoken) is directed at individuals with diverse values or interests in the issues.

A second version, which might be termed the *consequences-alternatives model*, can work if everyone in the clientele group has similar values and interests. In this case the group explains its objectives, then the educator helps them understand which policy alternatives might produce those consequences and which side effects, or other consequences, might also result. This version of the Alternatives-Consequences model is often used with a small, homogeneous group or with a single individual in an informal meeting. This modification of the model does not necessarily transform the educator into an advocate *if* his/her approach is objective and educational, and if the educator works with a variety of groups with conflicting interests and does not become too closely identified with any one group or point of view. This approach is useful and practical in many situations, but can also be more dangerous because: (1) the educator assumes that the group understands the basic problem, which may not be the case; (2) the educator must assume that the audience does, in fact, agree on the basic consequences desired, which also may not be the case; and (3) the educator risks being identified as an advocate unless he works with many groups with opposite viewpoints.

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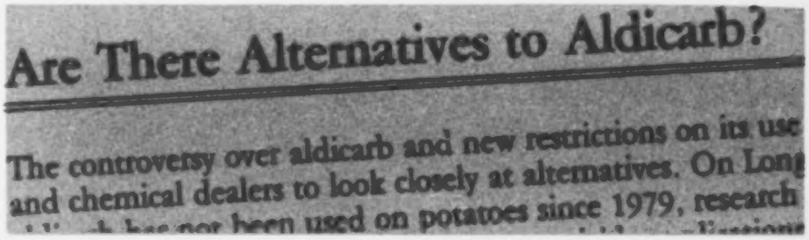
[11] This version of the Advocacy Model is very well articulated in two short articles by James H. Laue: "Coping with Conflict: Understanding Strategies and Developing Skills" and in "Value-Free Objective Educators". Both papers are contained in *Coping with Conflict: Strategies for Extension Community Development and Public Policy Professionals*, North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, Iowa State University, Ames, 1979.

*The Alternatives-Consequences Model, or some variation of the model, is the most appropriate teaching method for public policy education.* The arguments in its favor are: (1) the educator has no right to assume an advocacy position; (2) the educator is not necessarily trained or competent to assume the position of a professional advocate; (3) the advocacy method is ineffective and will eventually destroy the educator's credibility; (4) the Alternatives-Consequences model is more consistent with a democratic political system and the philosophical basis for public policy education. In the end, however, a program which is carefully designed and perfectly objective may be perceived as politically biased, and although apolitical in spirit, will generally not be politically neutral. These arguments will be briefly explored.

*First, the educator has no right to assume an advocacy position.* Public policy education involves public issues on which everyone is not agreed. Reasonable people disagree on the appropriate course for society, based on their values, attitudes and beliefs and their own interests at stake in the decision. Although the weight of objective evidence may occasionally be overwhelmingly in favor of one side of the policy debate, the vast majority of issues involve situations in which: (1) the necessary objective data are not all known; or (2) the known facts can be legitimately interpreted in two or more ways; or (3) the facts are known and have only one interpretation but different value systems lead individuals to choose different policy alternatives; or (4) combinations of the first three cases.

In the typical situation, for the educator to assume an advocacy position is tantamount to making the assertion that he has the only clear view of the facts, can make all the right interpretations and has the socially optimal or only correct set of values. If the society believed this, extension specialists and agents would be proclaimed philosopher-kings. Extension faculty were hired to be educators, so it is best not to assume the other role.

*Second, the educator is not trained in the unscientific art of advocacy.* The essence of science is the balanced weighing of evidence. *Advocacy* implies making a case for one side or another. *Science* implies a balanced consideration of facts on both sides of the issue. The extension educator is trained a a biological, social or physical scientist, not as an advocate.[12]



Are There Alternatives to Aldicarb?

The controversy over aldicarb and new restrictions on its use

and chemical dealers to look closely at alternatives. On Long

has not been used on potatoes since 1979, research

***Rather than advocate a particular policy, the Extension educator is better off listing alternatives and explaining the likely consequences of each choice.***

*Third, the Advocacy Model is not likely to be effective in the long run.* If the extension educator advocates a particular position, he will alienate a part of the public that holds other positions. If the educator repeats his advocacy role on issue after issue, he eventually alienates virutally everyone. At some point his credibility declines to the point that he is no longer effective as an extension educator because no one is willing to listen. Even those who focus exclusively on a single clientele group eventually lose credibility if they assume an advocacy position on each issue. Although their clientele may be united on some issues, the group may be strongly divided on others. Eventually the advocate will alienate almost everyone, even in the most narrowly-defined clientele group. The Advocacy Model is also potentially disastrous for Extension as an organization. If individual specialists and agents each choose the Advocacy Model on sensitive issues, they will collectively alienate just about everyone and reduce the level of support for Extension as a whole. Thus, the advocacy position may enable the educator to effectively advance his positions in the short-run, but in the long-run it is not tenable for the individual or for the Extension organization.

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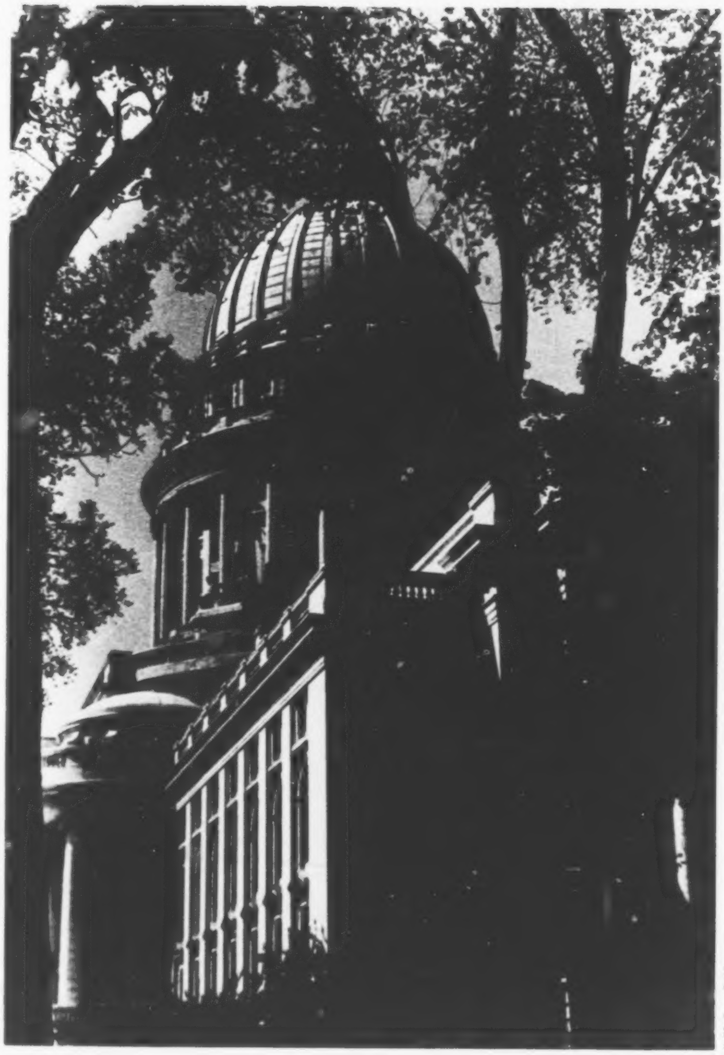
[12] For a discussion of advocacy, scientific knowledge and the activities of scientists, see "Science, Values, and Human Judgement," by Kenneth R. Hammond and Leonard Adelman, *Science*, Vol. 22, pp. 389-396, October, 1976.

*Fourth, the Alternatives-Consequences model is consistent with the democratic political system and general philosophy of public policy education.* If citizens are to participate effectively in the political process, they must understand the policy issues, the policy alternatives and the likely consequences of each. The facts must be presented objectively, but the value judgements for selecting a single alternative must be applied by the people and their elected representatives, not by the educator. The representatives of the people are elected to make the necessary value judgements. They stand exposed to constitutents who can lobby them to influence their decisions and remove them from office if their value judgements do not coincide sufficiently with the public's. The educator's role is to make certain that the people and their representatives are presented with an objective analysis of the problem, the policy alternatives and their likely consequences. The choice is appropriately left to the people and to the political process. Our responsibility as educators is to teach people how to think, not to think for them.

A final set of criticisms can be leveled at the version of the Advocacy Model that claims the educator should work to help empower groups whose interests are not represented in the democratic process. First, the empowerment argument maintains that information is more valuable to those with power than to those without power. This is not always true, and in fact may very seldom be true. If the public is not informed about a problem or issue then those with decision-making power are free to do as they please with no threat of public reaction. Information is power, and information can help those outside the formal decision-making channel at least as much as those on the inside. Second, if the educator proposes to help empower those groups whose interests are not represented then (s)he must define what "adequate representation" means in a democracy. In an extreme case this might be fairly easy, e.g., everyone should be able to vote, hold office or speak freely. But in almost any practical situation it is never quite clear how much representation is enough and how much is too little. The educator must assume thr role of the philosopher-king in order to be this type of advocate. Finally, few would disagree that the democratic process works best when the "rules of the game" allow people to participate in making decisions that affect them. But these rules are not immutable—if we think that the interests of some groups are not adequately represented we can change the way the decision-making process works. For example, this is exactly what happened with the National Environmental Policy Act in the early 1970's which gave environmentalists a very strong voice in many decisions by establishing requirements for environmental impact statements. Most important for the educator is the fact that possible changes in the rules for making decisions can themselves be the subject of an objective educational program conducted in an alternatives-consequences framework. The educator can avoid becoming an advocate even when (s)he deals with issues that would change the relative power of various groups in the decision-making process.

## THE EDUCATOR AS CITIZEN

None of this means that the educator cannot express his opinions on public issues or lobby his elected representatives *in his role as a private citizen*. The difficulty, of course, is that it is not so easy to separate the actions of the educator from those of the private citizen. For many extension educators the line between advocacy as an educator and advocacy as a private citizen is not totally clear. The more visible the educator's advocacy as a citizen, the more likely it is that (s)he will be perceived as an advocate in his (her) educational work. Many extension faculty who deal with public affairs consciously decide to engage in very little, or very low-key political activity off the job in order to avoid confusing the public as to which role they are playing. Others concentrate on national rather than state or local issues. This may help but will not always avoid the problem because local feelings may run as high on national issues as on issues closer to home. Often, county agents and state specialists (including the author) will take a temporary leave-of-absence to work in state or local government. Often this requires the individual to assume an advocacy position on some issues. But even if the individual follows a strictly objective program and tries to avoid advocacy, many people will assume that the individual is an advocate simply by his position in government. All of these concerns do not mean that public policy educators cannot exercise the political rights and freedoms of a U.S. citizen, nor does it mean that the educator, the extension organization and the state/local government should give up the great benefits that come when people move from one position to another. These issues are raised as a reminder that there is an inevitable trade-off between political or governmental activity on one hand and one's perceived objectivity and nonadvocacy on the other. Each individual must seek a balance that (s)he believes is appropriate.



Michael Venner

## OBJECTIVITY AND POLITICAL NEUTRALITY

The relationship between objectivity and political neutrality should be explored carefully. Public policy education programs must be objective. Obviously, complete objectivity is humanly impossible, but people generally recognize and respect an effort to be as objective as possible.[13] The most important point is that the educator must avoid becoming an advocate for one group or one position on the issue. In striving for objectivity and avoiding advocacy the educator will in fact be trying to maintain a position of strict neutrality among the various interests active in the political debate.

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[13] For a similar argument on the importance of striving for objectivity, see J. Carroll Bottom, "Public Policy Education: Purpose Methodology, and Accomplishments" in *Increasing Understanding of Public Problems and Policies-1980*, Farm Foundation, Oak Brook, Ill. 1980.

However, objective information, an unbiased approach and lack of advocacy do *not* necessarily mean that the educator or his program is politically neutral. Political neutrality may be impossible to maintain because there is an inevitable bias in the issues we choose to address, and because simply discussing an issue may favor one group or another.

The issues we choose are influenced by our professional training and our own professional judgement about what is sufficiently important to warrant our attention. Also, we all tend to work on problems that our values tell us are important; we do not choose to work on things that we believe are bad or harmful. In fact, many people will assume that the educator is an advocate of some alternative or another, simply because (s)he chooses to talk or write about the issue.

An objective public policy education is also not politically neutral because it alters the political balance of power on the issue. First, when we conduct an educational program on a specific issue, we increase the public's awareness of that issue—hardly a politically neutral act even if the program is completely objective. Second, simply providing objective information to the public may upset the strategy of one side or another in the political debate. For example, when voters lack information on tax-increase referenda, they are more likely to vote *no*, other things being equal. Providing perfectly objective information on a tax-increase referendum is not politically neutral because it tends to favor a *yes* vote. Third, increasing a group's understanding of an issue increases its ability to effectively use whatever political leverage it may have. In fact, knowledge is power. An educational program will benefit groups without good knowledge of the issue more than groups that already clearly understood the policy alternatives and consequences.

Clearly, even the most objective and unbiased public policy education program will not be politically neutral. Objectivity and a non-advocacy method will not produce political neutrality. One implication is that even a perfectly objective public policy education program conducted in the alternatives-consequences manner runs some chance of generating political controversy with which the educator and other Extension faculty and administrators must deal.

On this point, Neill Schaller, former head of the Federal Extension Service noted that ". . . we cannot expect to be loved when we deal with controversy. But we will be widely respected if we do it right. So how do we make that happen? First, we should insist that those who teach and prepare materials resist the temptation or the pressure to take sides when dealing with a controversial issue. . ."[14]

Over the years, public policy educators have developed some teaching methods to reduce real or perceived bias in their information. Identifying the groups potentially affected by an issue/problem or its solution, and viewing the problem from *their* perspective can help ensure that the relevant alternatives and consequences are identified. Many public policy educators try to avoid classifying consequences as "advantages," "disadvantages" or "pro-con" because what is an advantage to one group may be a disadvantage to another.[15] Including "do nothing" as a policy alternative may help eliminate real or perceived bias and is often a useful way of illustrating the extent of the problem. (Some educators may be tempted to advocate doing something but not advocating a specific action. Yet if the problem is obviously so bad the "do nothing" alternative will be quickly rejected by everyone). Asking leaders or others on all sides of the issue to review teaching materials can also help identify information that may be perceived as biased. But if one group is asked all should be asked. In the end, the ability to listen to others' views and to emphasize with others' perspectives is probably the best guarantee that the teaching materials and methods will avoid major bias, and that the educator will be perceived as striving for objectivity.

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[14] Memo from W. Neill Schaller to State Extension Directors, November 27, 1978; Office of Deputy Director for Extension, Science and Education Administration, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.

[15] See Robert J. Bevins, "Defusing Public Decision," in *Community Decision Making*, University of Missouri-Columbia, Extension Division, no date.

# SUMMARY

Public policy education enables citizens to make better informed decisions on public issues. It is consistent with the mission of the Land Grant University and is based on a Jeffersonian view of the importance of education in the democratic political process.

To function effectively in public policy education the educator must have faith in the democratic process and in the ability of well-informed people to make good public decisions. As an organization, Extension must support its staff in policy education projects because even the most objective and unbiased program may generate political controversy.

A public policy education program must deal with the issues defined by the public, not those defined by extension educators. Not all issues are appropriate subjects for policy education programs; extension educators must have the necessary knowledge, the issue must be amenable to factual analysis, and the program must be ready at the teachable moment. The only absolute in public policy education is that the extension program should be as objective and unbiased as possible. Advocacy is not an effective or desirable teaching method; instead the educator should help people better understand the problem, the policy alternatives and their likely consequences. This method allows the educator to apply the knowledge of the university to public policy issues in a manner that strengthens public participation in the democratic decision-making process.

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# Public Policy Education in Extension Home Economics

Report of the Task Force on Public Policy Education in Home Economics,
Subcommittee on Home Economics, Extension Committee on Organization and Policy
June 1984

Hunger Tax reform plans Abuse Nutrition

Land use Energy proposals Toxic substances

Day care Food policy Health care Water

Retirement plans Housing Teenage pregnancy

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## OBJECTIVES FOR PUBLIC POLICY EDUCATION IN EXTENSION HOME ECONOMICS

The objectives of public policy education in extension home economics are to:

- build awareness of the impact of public policy on families and understanding of issues affecting families;
- promote understanding of the policy-making process and identify strategies to increase citizen involvement in this process;
- increase individual and family members' knowledge of alternatives to and consequences of specific policy issues; and
- develop leadership skills as a means to increasing the involvement of individuals and family members in the policy-making process.

## INTRODUCTION

If the democratic process depends on the participation of citizens, then the goal of a study of public issues is to create knowledgeable citizens who can raise issues, assess the effect of public actions, and contribute to this process.

Public policy education is a process whose goals are to help citizens in a democracy:

- clarify issues;
- gain access to knowledge that they can use in developing a range of alternative solutions to problems;
- evaluate the consequences of each proposed solution; and
- develop the skills needed to transmit their informed opinions to public decision makers.

The American public, in requesting assistance on family and community issues, has established public policy education as a legitimate program area for extension. Home economists in extension, who are familiar with research data and subject matter resources in public policy issues, play an increasingly important role as policy educators. To deliver effective educational programs that address these issues, extension home economists may need to redirect existing resources and skills.

Acting on the recommendations of its Subcommittee on Home Economics, the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP) appointed a Task Force on Public Policy Education in Home Economics to provide guidance in program development.

This report, compiled by the task force, explains the historical background, reasons, and objectives for developing a public policy education program in extension home economics; outlines program components and implementation strategies; and suggests a framework for activities in public policy education within extension home economics and family-living programs.

> *Public policy education is based on the assumption that a well-informed citizenry is crucial to the democratic process and that the democratic process is a reasonable means of making decisions.*
>
> RICHARD BARROWS (1983)

> *Extension will provide educational programs which promote positive interrelationships between families and their communities.*
>
> ECOP TASK FORCE ON FAMILIES (1981)

## HISTORY AND RATIONALE FOR PUBLIC POLICY EDUCATION IN HOME ECONOMICS

The mission of the Cooperative Extension Service – to disseminate research-based information that people can use to improve their daily lives – has always included a public policy education component.

Public policy education has been supported and even mandated by Congress, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the ECOP, the Farm Foundation, and the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges (NASULGC).

Extension's involvement in public policy education began in the early 1920s with the development of programs in land use for farmers. In 1933, *The land-grant universities and the Cooperative Extension Service should significantly expand their research, teaching, and extension programs that relate to public affairs problems . . . even though it may mean dealing with controversial issues.*

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE COMMITTEE ON POLICY (1969)

*Home economics extension works to: . . . improve the ability to effect and adapt to . . . change by exploring solutions which deal with problems and concerns of individuals and families.*

HOME ECONOMICS SUBCOMMITTEE OF ECOP (1974)

*Viable, growing organizations must serve emerging needs and issues and incur some risk because the alternative of being "safe" is, in reality, also "risky."*

RONALD C. POWERS (1979)

the nonprofit Farm Foundation encouraged extension to help farm families understand the social, economic, and political consequences of various agricultural policies, and in the years following World War II, a policy committee appointed by NASULGC called attention to the urgent need for education on public policy issues in the transition from war to peacetime.

Since 1948, when Congress encouraged land-grant universities to conduct educational programs in the area of public affairs, congressional leadership has listed public affairs education as one of nine high-priority program areas for extension. Today, extension's programs in public policy education address such diverse issues as food, the environment, energy, nutrition, state and local government finance, and international trade.

The USDA has also supported public policy education as a responsibility of extension. In 1968, the USDA challenged extension to "at least double its efforts in public affairs education."[1] In 1971, extension home economics was directed to focus on a number of areas, including "understanding of family-related public policy and laws related to consumption and citizenship."[2] In 1983, a USDA publication gave extension home economics responsibility for helping "individuals and families identify their needs, conserve their resources, achieve a desired level of living, and be informed participants in the evaluation and formulation of public policy."[3]

The ECOP has recommended that the Cooperative Extension Service expand its public affairs programming so as to help families acquire the knowledge and skills they need to take part in the decision-making process at all levels of government.

Public decisions can either increase or limit the alternatives available to people by mandating individual and group actions. The choice of one public policy initiative over another can magnify or diminish the impact on families. Issues currently under debate at all levels of government include proposed programs and policies in the following areas:

- energy costs;
- the consumer's right to product safety and information;
- health care needs and costs;
- child care;
- Social Security entitlement and benefits;
- parent/child relationships;
- environmental quality;
- teen pregnancy;
- availability and cost of an adequate food supply;
- cross-cultural and intergenerational relationships;
- the impact of media on children;
- the organization of work activities; and
- violence in the family and society.

Many special-interest groups are well represented in the public decision-making process. Their influence, however, reflects the values of a special constituency and is often based on a single, narrowly focused perspective.

Public policy education can broaden participation by involving diverse segments of the population. Extension home economists, who have knowledge about and access to the family-oriented research base of the home economics disciplines, can play a vital part in helping people make useful, informed contributions to this process. Because extension home economists draw information from the biological, physical, and social sciences with an emphasis on the interaction of people in families and communities, they are uniquely qualified to develop a range of alternative solutions to family problems.

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[1] A People and a Spirit. Report of the Joint USDA-NASULGC Study Committee on Cooperative Extension. Fort Collins: Colorado State University, November 1968.

[2] Richard Barrows. Public Policy Education -- Key Concepts and Methods. Ames: North Central Regional Extension, Iowa State University, 1983.

[3] Sidney C. Cleveland. On the Extension Line. Vol. 13, no. 4. Ithaca, N.Y.: New York State Cooperative Extension, Cornell University, 1981.

## ROLE OF EXTENSION HOME ECONOMISTS IN PUBLIC POLICY EDUCATION

The mission of home economics is to improve the economic and social well-being of individuals and families through education. Extension home economists can enhance this goal by increasing peoples' awareness of and ability to analyze issues and contribute to the policy-making process.

Extension home economists deal with public issues in existing home economics educational programs. For example, they identify day-care needs within child development programs, food policy issues within food and nutrition programs, and land-use policy within the context of a community's assessment of housing alternatives for the elderly. The program development framework of public policy education serves as a guide for educators addressing these important issues.

Through contact with families in extension programs, extension home economists gain a strong understanding of the dynamic interface between families and communities. Their professional background helps them view issues from the perspective of the people who are affected.

Participants in public policy education programs often feel they need training in information gathering and analysis, problem solving, and communication skills. Extension home economists, who are experienced in working with volunteer leaders through homemaker groups and 4-H youth programs, can use their experiences to assist program participants to develop competence in these areas.

Whether they are assisting people in identifying family and community dimensions of problems or serving as a source of information, extension home economists have access to research-based data that can help people reach objective decisions. As public policy educators, they can provide this help in an accurate and unbiased fashion, thus facilitating informed decision making on the part of individuals and families.

## COMPONENTS OF PUBLIC POLICY EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN HOME ECONOMICS

Extension's current public policy education programs have four separate and distinct components:

- building awareness of the impact of public policies on families and understanding of issues affecting families;
- promoting understanding of the policy-making process and identifying strategies to increase involvement in this process;
- increasing people's knowledge of alternatives to and consequences of specific policies; and
- developing leadership skills as a means to increasing involvement in the policy-making process.

### Building Awareness of the Impact of Public Policies

Perhaps the most important goal of extension's public policy education program is to increase awareness of the impact of public policy decisions on families. Laws, regulations, and court rulings can affect the primary functions of families, such as:

*Maximum effectiveness of the public affairs educator will more likely be achieved through some optimum combination of several channels of communication than by reliance upon a single channel.*

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE COMMITTEE ON POLICY (1969)

*The aim of Extension Home Economics is to help people use knowledge to better their everyday lives.*

LUCINDA NOBLE (1983)

*It is the change in conditions about food and nutrition, housing, safety of household equipment and fabrics, local government and land use that have made what used to be straight forward objective extension education on these topics a part of the policy process.*

R. J. HILDRETH (1979)

*This country needs more public affairs participants who are informed, understanding, and responsible. To produce such men and women is the major goal of public affairs education. Our future as a democracy rests upon both the quality and the quantity of citizen participation.*

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE COMMITTEE ON POLICY (1969)

*The demands of our extension audience for policy education have changed. The audience wants more sophisticated information on a much wider range of issues.*

EDWIN KIRBY (1975)

*Families in the 1980s cope with the cumulative effects of several decades of change.*

MARY NELL GREENWOOD (1981)

*The home economists are sensitive to many issues . . . issues that deserve solid, professional, educational intervention.*

VERNE HOUSE (1981)

- membership function – policies dealing with adoption, foster care, family separation, death, divorce, birth, or marriage;
- nurturing function – issues affecting day care, education, and health;
- economic function – policies affecting family income or how income may be spent;
- coordinating and mediating function – decisions recognizing the diversity of family lifestyles and allowing for individual and family input;

Policy education programs should help audiences understand that public decisions affect different families in different ways, depending on their composition, demographics, ethnic background, and members' educational backgrounds.

## Promoting Understanding of the Policy-Making Process

If programs in public policy education are to increase understanding of the policy-making process and identify methods for interacting in that process, they should not be limited to a review of the history and organization of government. Effective programming must also include opportunities for participants to develop knowledge about the following issues:

- The legal authority of the policy-making unit, including such topics as:
    - mandates and constraints on the decision-making process;
    - laws governing citizens' rights to participate in and influence government;
    - background on laws and regulations;
    - background on how interpretations of laws change; and
    - alternative processes for changing laws;
- The fiscal implications of policy, including:
    - short- and long-term costs of implementing alternative policies;
    - sources of government funding;
    - factors that influence the availability of funding;
    - budget terms and processes; and
    - political priorities for spending;
- The formal and informal forces in society that influence change:
    - society's standards for government's role in the social, economic, and educational life of the community;
    - level of services expected from social service agencies and government;
    - the role of individual values and attitudes in shaping public decisions;
    - the role of the courts;
    - the role of political parties in government;
    - the influence of special-interest groups; and
    - an understanding of power and how it is exercised.

## Increasing People's Knowledge about Policy Issues

To increase people's knowledge about policy issues, they must be given an opportunity to participate in a variety of planned experiences and to practice what they have learned. Extension policy educators have successfully used the alternatives/consequences problem-solving model to facilitate this process. The following steps are included in this model:

- select and clearly define an issue or problem;
- develop a wide range of alternative solutions to the problem;

- explore the consequences of these alternatives, including comparing the costs and benefits of each proposal for all segments of the population; and
- help individuals obtain the information and acquire the skills needed to participate effectively in the policy-making process.

### Developing Leadership Skills

Leadership development has traditionally been a part of all extension programming. Within public policy education in home economics, leadership training emphasizes three major interrelated areas:

- enhancing personal leadership skills;
- clarifying organizational concepts; and
- developing the skills necessary to participate effectively in shaping policy in one's community.

The leadership development component of public policy education within home economics is unique in that potential rather than established leaders are frequently the program audience. Therefore, extension home economists will often work with family members to enhance self-confidence in preparation for taking leadership roles.

The arena the audience chooses for implementing these skills determines whether or not this training can be seen as public policy education. Thus all leadership development training is not public policy education, and leadership development is only one part of public policy education.

## MAJOR CONSIDERATIONS IN PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Programs in public policy education, which seek to achieve broad, complex goals, should provide a series of interrelated learning experiences that integrate knowledge and understanding from a progression of program components.

Although each component can be a focus for the development of educational experiences, it is the continuum of learning that prepares people to become effective participants in public decision making. The continuum leads from awareness to understanding to increased knowledge to identifying alternatives and consequences of choices to acquiring leadership skills.

Public policy education is an area in which extension can expand its clientele. It is therefore important to involve people outside the traditional audience for extension home economics programming. The particular audience for a given public policy education program depends on the issue being addressed, while recognizing that diversity in clientele promotes dialogue and increases potential for discovering a new approach.

In developing audiences for programs in public policy education, the following people should be encouraged to participate:

- people affected by the problem;
- people with an interest in community affairs;
- people who can influence how the problem is resolved; and
- the general public.

In exploring a public issue, a range of individual and group perceptions should be included. Increasing awareness and understanding may be the most complex part of extension's role in public policy education for families.

It is the responsibility of the extension educator to ensure that all sides of an issue are discussed and that all factions have an opportunity to contribute to its resolution. Structuring discussion so that all viewpoints are presented in as objective and neutral a manner as possible is a major responsibility of the program developer.

> *Cooperative Extension: It is a process of leadership development for the community, state, and national organizations. It is a process of life enrichment and individual fulfillment. It is a process for people to define and learn skills to meet their most urgent needs now and in the future.*
>
> ECOP (1979)

> *Goals are expressions of what people want . . . of "what ought to be." The educator is responsible for helping people examine goals but . . . not . . . to tell them "what ought to be."*
>
> COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE COMMITTEE ON POLICY (1969)

> *Each time one of us slips from objective methodology into advocate roles, the capacity to articulate and communicate is severely constrained.*
>
> WILLIAM W. WOOD, JR. (1980)

Evaluating the impact of extension's efforts in public policy education is a vital element in the design of the program. Evaluation can provide extension educators and key leaders with important information about program effectiveness that can be used to build and improve programs and to ensure support for future efforts.

## CONCLUSION

For our democratic form of government to function effectively, citizens must participate. Democracy works best when the full spectrum of the citizenry, with its diverse interests and needs, gives direction to policy makers. When that influence comes from citizens whose ideas are based on knowledge and an understanding of issues, the system is further strengthened.

*In accountability, we need to relate the learning changes we bring about to the ultimate tangible product or practice that affects communities.*

SARA M. STEELE (1978)

If democracy is to serve as well in the future as it has in the past, families need to be involved. Many policy decisions have implications for families, yet often there is no advocate to represent their interests. Therefore, the major goal of public policy education in home economics is to help people effectively represent their families' interests in the formation of public policy.

To make an active, vital contribution to shaping the policies that govern them, families need to understand the public decision-making process. They need information on issues and the skills to interact effectively with policy makers. Furthermore, as they become more involved, individuals and families must develop an awareness of the far-reaching effects of public decisions.

*The function of public policy education is to teach people so they can analyze public issues on the basis of objective facts and principles.*

BONNIE MCGEE (1980)

In accepting the challenge of public policy education, extension home economists have an opportunity to increase the scope of their profession. Thoughtful consideration of community needs and consultation with extension staff and leadership are essential.

As professionals who are concerned about the future well-being of families, extension home economists must take the lead in strengthening family participation in the democratic decision-making process through public policy education.

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# Working With Our Publics

*In-Service Education*
*for Cooperative Extension*

## Module 6
Education for Public Decisions

**Transparency Masters**

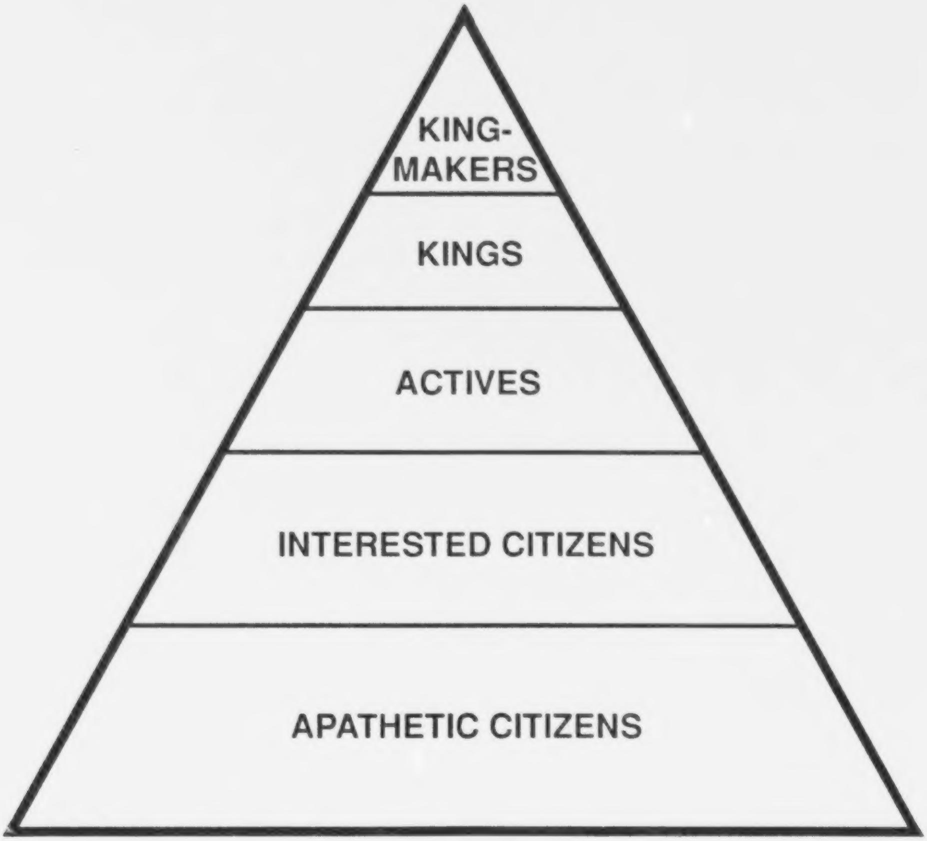
I know
no safe depository
of the ultimate powers
of the society but the
people themselves;

and if we think them
not enlightened enough
to exercise their control
with a wholesome discretion,

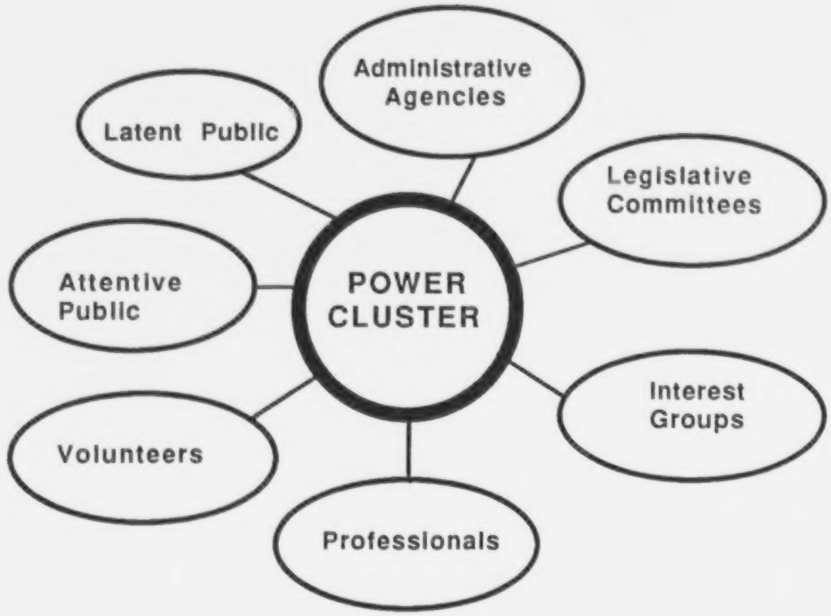
the remedy is not
to take it from them, but
to inform their discretion
by education.

**THOMAS JEFFERSON**

In a letter to William Charles Jarvis, September 28, 1820



KINGS and KINGMAKERS Model



### Each power cluster is composed of the same basic elements:

**Administrative agencies** include departments, bureaus, services, and commissions at the federal, state, and local government levels which deal in that subject area.

**Legislative Committees** specialize in subject-matter areas at all levels of government. Members seek assignments to committees that interest them and will help them politically.

**Interest groups** include large service groups ( in Agriculture-Grange, Farmer's Union, etc.), private business (Swift, John Deere, etc.). Many have organized PACs or Political Action Contributions.

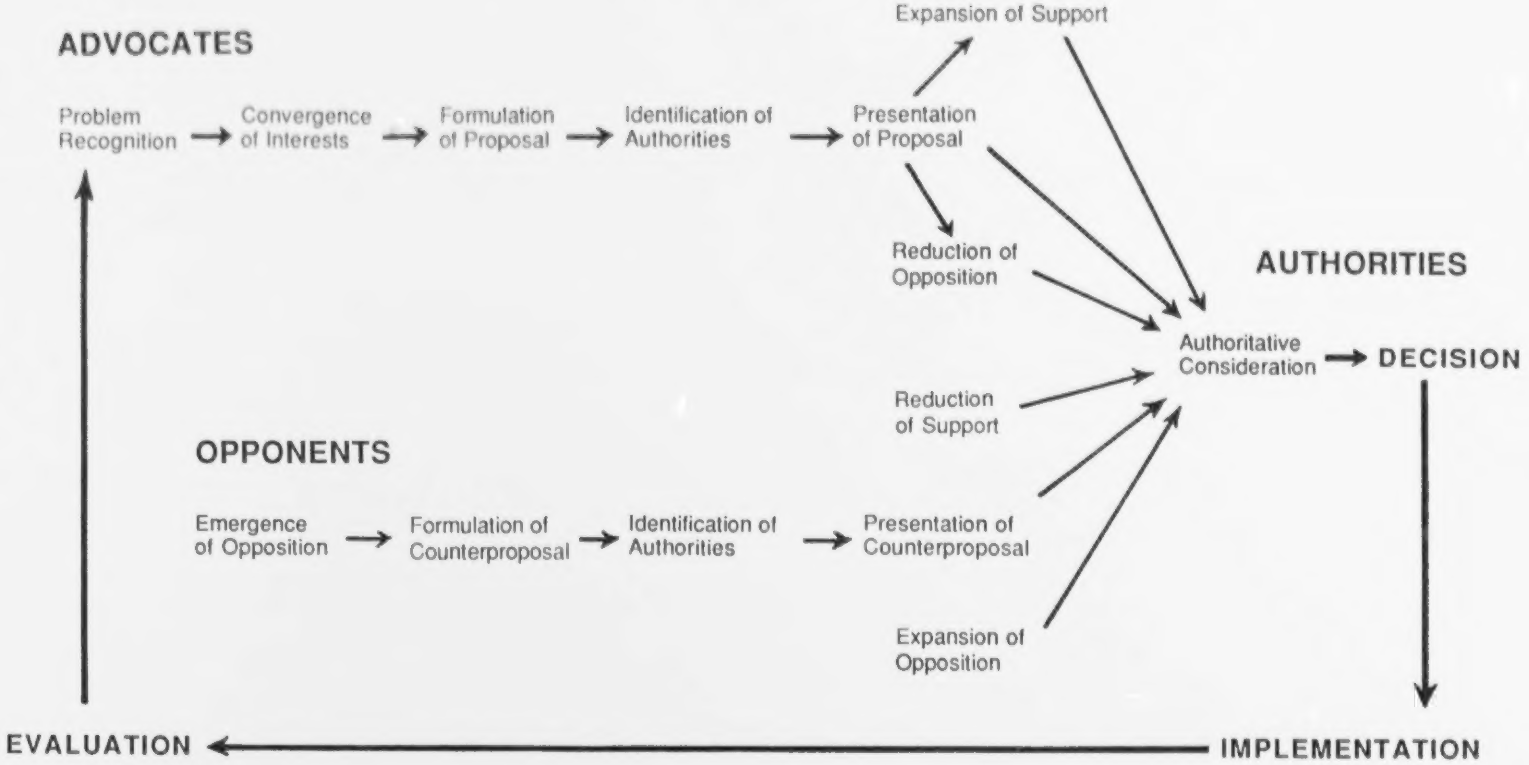
**Professionals**, with an expertise that is helpful in a certain cluster often make their living serving that group. Lawyers, engineers, accountants, biologists, and rate experts are a few of the service professionals involved.

**Volunteers** who make their living in other fields but take a keen personal interest in the subject of a cluster are influential in the decisions made by the cluster.

An **attentive public** forms the backdrop for each power cluster. They usually pay special attention to the one area of public policy that affects the way they advance economically and socially. They can be aroused over a controversy and may get involved.

A **latent public** is affected by a power cluster's decisions, but they do not feel the decisions are adverse or have much impact. So, they concentrate on other things. If a major policy change causes them concern, however, they will try to interfere with the cluster's decisionmaking.

# POWER CLUSTER MODEL



**ADVOCATES**

Problem Recognition → Convergence of Interests → Formulation of Proposal → Identification of Authorities → Presentation of Proposal

Expansion of Support

Reduction of Opposition

**AUTHORITIES**

Authoritative Consideration → **DECISION**

Reduction of Support

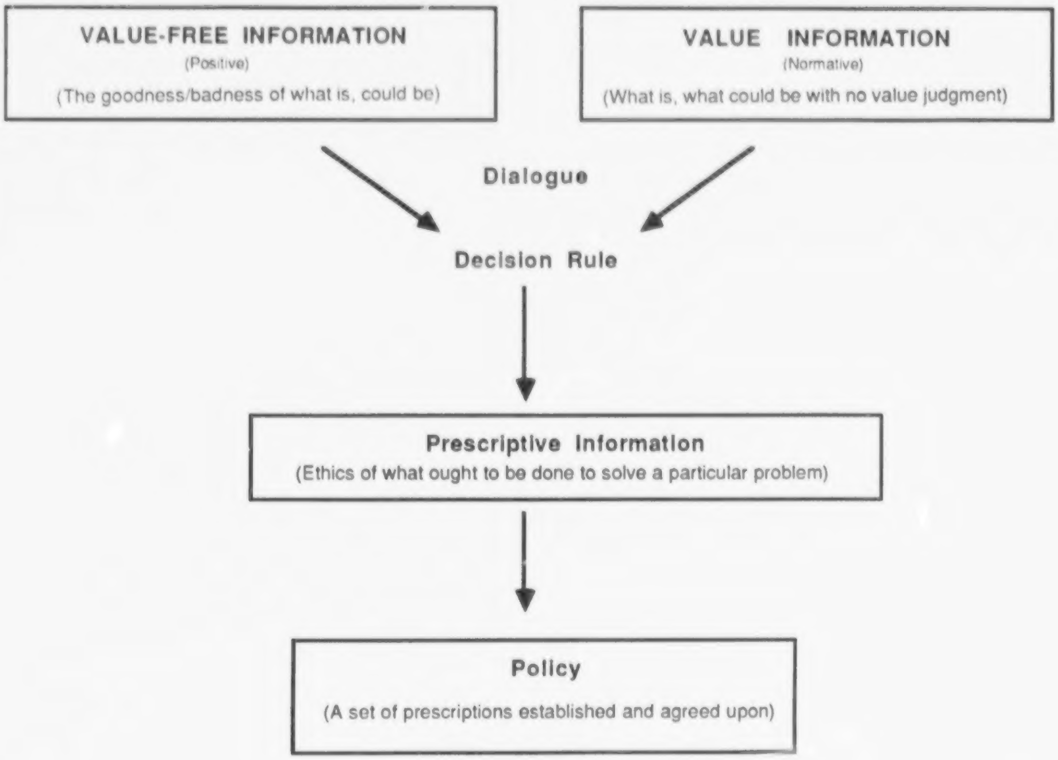
**OPPONENTS**

Emergence of Opposition → Formulation of Counterproposal → Identification of Authorities → Presentation of Counterproposal

Expansion of Opposition

**IMPLEMENTATION** → **EVALUATION**

# STAGES in the DECISIONMAKING PROCESS



**VALUE-FREE INFORMATION**
(Positive)
(The goodness/badness of what is, could be)

**VALUE INFORMATION**
(Normative)
(What is, what could be with no value judgment)

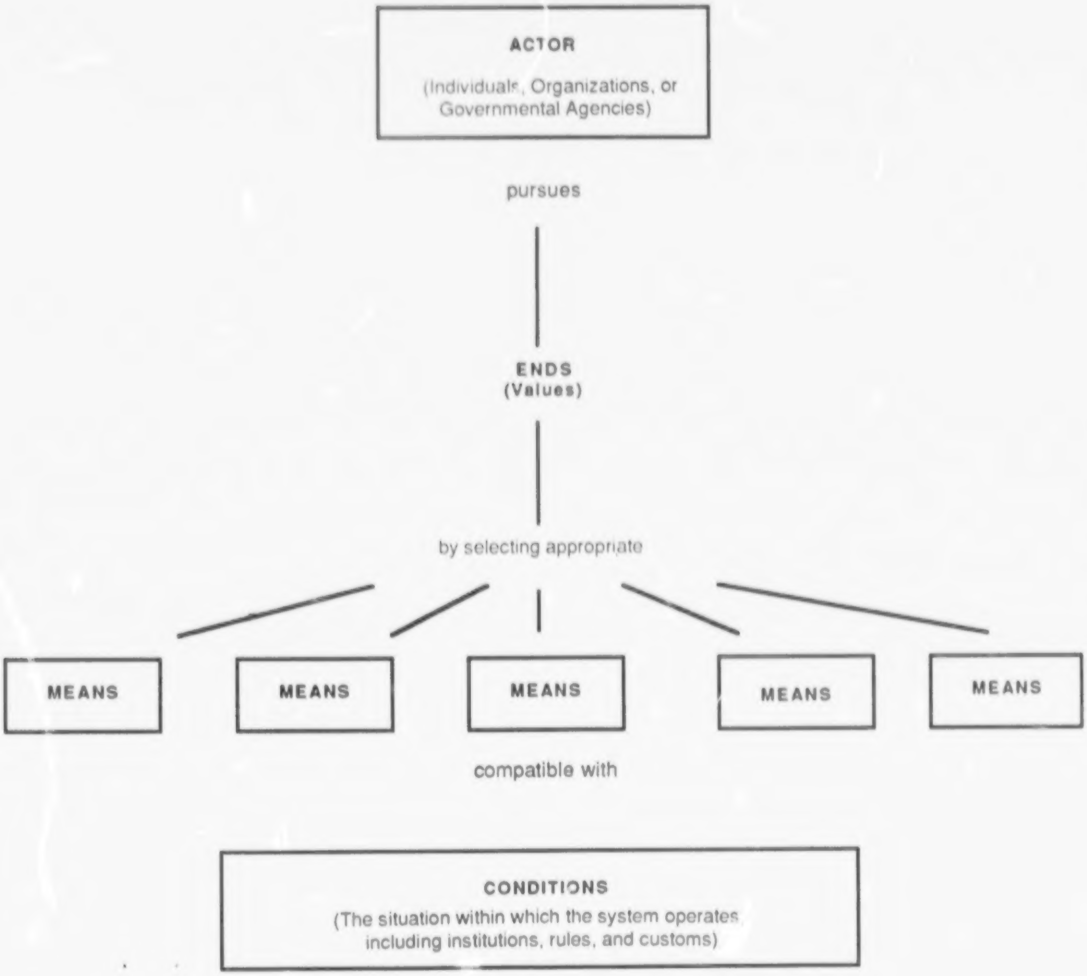
**Dialogue**

**Decision Rule**

**Prescriptive Information**
(Ethics of what ought to be done to solve a particular problem)

**Policy**
(A set of prescriptions established and agreed upon)

# Framework of a Public Policy Process



**ACTOR**

(Individuals, Organizations, or Governmental Agencies)

pursues

**ENDS**
**(Values)**

by selecting appropriate

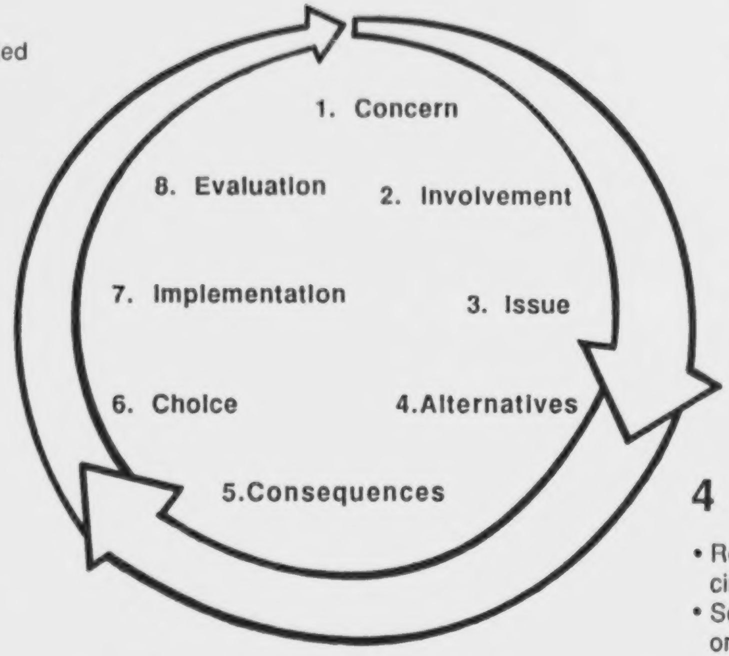
**MEANS** | **MEANS** | **MEANS** | **MEANS** | **MEANS**

compatible with

**CONDITIONS**

(The situation within which the system operates, including institutions, rules, and customs)

# Means/Ends Framework for Understanding the Public Policy Process



### 1 CONCERN

- Listen actively
- Ask clarifying questions
- Provide background information based on research

### 2 INVOLVEMENT

- Provide information about groups or individuals that might be helpful
- Facilitate communication among interested parties
- Publicize the concern through the media and meetings

### 3 ISSUE

- Document and disseminate alternative views on the issue
- Help clarify discussion

### 4 ALTERNATIVES

- Record alternatives and circulate list
- Seek out objective information on alternatives
- Facilitate communication and exchange of viewpoints

### 5 CONSEQUENCES

- Assemble and distribute objective information on consequences of each alternative

### 6 CHOICE

- Inform people how the choice will be made (Formal/informal; decision arena; decisionmaking process)

### 7 IMPLEMENTATION

- Inform people how the policy came to be; what it is intended to do; who will be responsible for rules and enforcement, etc.

### 8 EVALUATION

- Encourage objective analysis of the policy
- Listen to people who are affected

## PHASES of ISSUE EVOLUTION

TOPIC or AREA of CONCERN :

## SITUATION ANALYSIS

| EXISTING CONDITIONS | | DESIRED FUTURE CONDITIONS |
|---|---|---|
| What individuals and families are affected by this topic? | How are individuals and families affected? | What would you like to accomplish through educational programs for individuals and families? |
| What groups and organizations are affected by this topic? | How are groups and organizations affected? | What would you like to accomplish through educational programs for groups and organizations? |
| What community decision-makers are affected by this topic? | How are community decisionmakers affected? | What would you like to accomplish through educational programs for community decisionmakers? |

## POSSIBLE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

| FOR INDIVIDUALS and FAMILIES | FOR GROUPS and ORGANIZATIONS | FOR COMMUNITY DECISION MAKERS |
|---|---|---|
| What educational programs should be delivered to individuals and families? | What do groups and organizations need to learn about the individual and family level? | What do community decision-makers need to learn about individuals and families? |
| What do individuals and families need to learn about the organizational level? | What educational programs should be delivered to groups and organizations? | What do community decision-makers need to learn about the organizational level? |
| What do individuals and families need to learn about the decisionmaking level? | What do groups and organizations need to learn about the decisionmaking process? | What educational programs should be delivered to community decisionmakers? |

— Prepared by David Deshler and Alan Hahn; adapted from Boyd, Apps, and Others (1980), *Redefining the Discipline of Adult Education.*

# Public Policy Education in Extension Is:

A planned process through which
the concerned public receives:

**INFORMATION**
* Technical
* Alternatives/Consequences

**PROCESS TRAINING**
* How “the system” works
* How participation is possible

**LEADERSHIP TRAINING**
* To increase citizen involvement
* To improve policy education

# CRITERIA for PROGRAM FOCUS

1. Is it of public interest?
2. Is it controversial?
3. Can you access scientific information about the topic?
4. Is the timing right?
5. Are you really interested in it?

# Three Directions for Policy Programs

1. Education
2. Advocacy
3. Organizational Maintenance

# Roles:

* Information provider/analyst

* Educational program developer

* Advisor

* Process Trainer

* Forecaster

# MANAGING CONTROVERSY

* Develop program before polarization
* Touch base with leaders
* Be aware of your own biases
* Include representatives for all views
* Use alternatives-consequences approach
* Collaborate with other educators
* Know the audience
* Plan agendas to avoid “heat”
* Use or “borrow” good group communications skills

# AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

* Is a planned process

* Offers continuity to the learner

* May provide a variety of approaches

* Uses good educational practices

* Appeals to varied audiences

* Is flexible

* Can be evaluated

# RELIABILITY and CREDIBILITY

* Remember the land-grant mission

* Provide valid information

* Teach clients how to research, too

* Include capable resource people

* Provide the same message to all parties

DON'T HOLD AN EVENT WITHOUT THEM!

# Why Are We Doing This?

If the democratic process
is to function,
citizens must be well-informed
and have the opportunity
to participate in policy decisions

I know
no safe depository
of the ultimate powers
of the society but the
people themselves;

and if we think them
not enlightened enough
to exercise their control
with a wholesome discretion,

the remedy is not
to take it from them, but
to inform their discretion
by education.

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In a letter to William Charles Jarvis. September 28, 1820